Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXIII, Issue No. 66 | WEDNESDAY APRIL 3, 2013 | www.saipantribune.com | 75¢

Tinian Dynasty 6 payrolls behind. PAGE 2

Tim Villagomez due back on Saipan for resentencing. PAGE 3

Inos takes witness stand in Fund hearing

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

» Governor says govt pursuing settlement discussions in good faith

Gov. Eloy S. Inos yesterday took the witness stand in federal court where he vouched on the administration's intent to continue pursuing settlement negotiations in good faith in connection with retiree Betty Johnson's class action against the CNMI government.

Inos' testimony basically resolved Johnson's emergency motion that was the subject of the hearing, and this prompted U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood to express appreciation to the governor for participating in the proceedings.

In a written order after the hearing, Tydingco-Gatewood ordered the CNMI government to continue making payments to the Fund consistent with the line-item appropriation of $10 million in its Fiscal Year 2013 budget.

The judge ordered the Fund not to distribute employee contributions to applicants under Public Laws 17-82 and 18-2 while settlement negotiations with bankruptcy chief judge Robert Faris are ongoing.

Tydingco-Gatewood directed the NMI Retirement Fund to continue processing applications under these two laws.

Tydingco-Gatewood, however, stressed that her order does not affect Johnson's right to later challenge the validity of Public Laws 17-82 and 18-2.

The judge set a status hearing for April 19, 2013 at 8:30am.

Johnson filed an emergency motion for clarification of Tydingco-Gatewood's order dated Jan. 18, 2013 with respect to Public Law 18-2.

Johnson argued that the emergency hearing is necessary because the passage of Public Law 18-2 will affect the viability of the ongoing settlement process.

Inos testified that the administration is participating in good faith in the settlement discussions before Judge Faris. He also agreed to hold "in abeyance" the implementation of Public Laws 17-82 and 18-2 until the settlement negotiations are completed.

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RELATED NEWS
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FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Gov. Eloy S. Inos emerges from Huriguchi Building in Garapan after a Fund hearing was held yesterday in the U.S. District Court for the NMI. The governor's testimony resolved the emergency motion filed by retiree Betty Johnson.

Agencies' budget requests need to be lowered to $114M

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

» Joint leadership meeting today between admin, lawmakers

Government agencies submitted to the Inos administration a total budget request of $170 million for fiscal year 2014 and this figure is being trimmed down to $114 million, which is the projected revenue available for government operations starting on Oct. 1.

Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider and press secretary Angel A. Demapan said that as of yesterday, the administration was able to trim the figure to $127 million.

The administration still has to shave off $13 million from that, to bring it down to $114 million that will be reflected in the governor's budget submission to the Legislature on or before May 1.

See BUDGET on Page 4

CHC charge master provides 'sliding fee scale' for low-income patients

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Health Center's new charge master, which increased fees for all services and supplies at the public hospital, provides lower payment for low-income patients.

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. CEO Juan N. Babauta made this clear in his self-evaluation report.

"CHCC established a sliding fee scale for low income patients under the new charge master," stated Babauta in his report, adding this sliding fee scale is to satisfy the requirement of the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Conditions of Participation.

Babauta

According to the CEO, the new charge master was enforced on Aug. 23, 2012 after publication in the Commonwealth Register. With the new fee scale, Babauta claimed that this is the first time the hospital will be charging fees for all supplies, medical, and other tools utilized from the public hospital. Charge fees for equipment use and services included those for autoclave, oxygen, and others.

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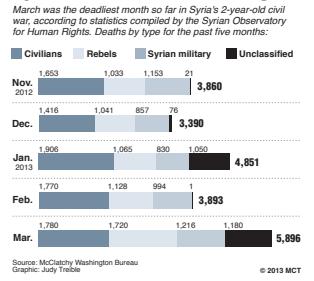
OPINION METER
This week's poll:
Who will be the 2013 NCAA Men's Basketball champion?
Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

ASIA

North Korea's parliament approved the appointment of a new premier seen by outside experts as an economic reformer. ➤ PAGE 15

WORLD


Syria: Deaths reach new high
March was the deadliest month so far in Syria's 2-year-old civil war, according to statistics compiled by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Deaths by type for the past five months:
Civilians
Rebels
Syrian military
Unclassified
Nov. 2012 1,653 1,033 1,153 21 3,860
Dec. 1,416 1,041 857 76 3,390
Jan. 2013 1,906 1,065 830 1,050 4,851
Feb. 1,770 1,128 994 1 3,893
Mar. 1,780 1,720 1,216 1,180 5,896
Source: McClatchy Washington Bureau
Graphic: Judy Treible
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March was the bloodiest month in Syria with than 6,000 documented deaths. ➤ PAGE 16

LIFE & STYLE

An amused President Barack Obama read a children's book. ➤ PAGE 20

Local

Tinian Dynasty 6 payrolls behind

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Many of Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino employees have yet to receive their paychecks for up to six payrolls or since January 2013 but the management said yesterday that as soon as cash flow improves, affected personnel will receive their salaries. While employees are torn between having delayed wages and losing their job, the employer has also been striving to stay open and continue to be a major economic contributor.

Affected employees are both U.S. citizens and nonresidents.

"As soon as we catch up on our cash flow, we will also catch up on payroll," the Tinian Dynasty management said yesterday.

Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino, one of the biggest private employers on Tinian, is the only one on island that offers five-star hotel facilities and casino that is the first of its kind in the Western Pacific.

However, just like other businesses in the CNMI, Tinian Dynasty is still reeling from an economic crunch and has taken a hit from slow business.

Employees have kept quiet about the delayed salaries but now that they are entering the fourth month, some are beginning to wonder whether change would improve soon.

"We thought that last year was the beginning of timely payment of our salaries but it wasn't. I thought it's okay at least I could have more to collect but six payrolls of delayed salary is too much. But I don't want to lose my job. I love my job," one of the employees told *Saipan Tribune*.

Rep. Trenton Conner (Ind-Tinian), when asked for comment yesterday, confirmed the delayed wages, owing to "inability of the business to generate revenue at this time." He said "local" workers' salaries have been delayed for "four or five" payrolls.

"What I know is Dynasty took a hit in December and February, casino-wise and is trying to recoup since," he said, adding that the municipal government has been aware of the situation.

Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz also confirmed the situation last night.

Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider will have a meeting today with Tinian officials mostly about priority capital improvement projects on Tinian. It is unknown whether Tinian Dynasty's delayed wages will be on the agenda.

Last year, a federal judge affirmed a full $191,400 in civil penalties against Hong Kong Entertainment (Overseas) Investment Ltd., owner of Tinian Dynasty, when the hotel-casino withheld overtime earnings from 348 employees when they failed to pay these workers over four bi-weekly pay periods years back. The back wages were subsequently paid in full.

Tinian Dynasty and the CNMI Department of Finance also wrapped up their negotiations last year to settle Tinian Dynasty's tax debt at a time when Dynasty was also negotiating with Taiwan-based Howarm Construction Co. Ltd. Howarm wanted to buy the only operating hotel-casino in the CNMI.

Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino opened on April 25, 1998 with a total of 412 guest rooms, including 22 executive suites and two presidential suites.

DEQ employees mark April as Environmental Awareness Month

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Staffers of the Division of Environmental Quality and its partner agencies pose for a group photo by a small monument outside the Governor's Office in Capitol Hill yesterday morning. Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider proclaimed April as Environmental Awareness Month and April 22 as CNMI Earth Day.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

Agencies such as the Division of Environmental Quality remind the public about the importance of looking after the CNMI's natural resources, according to Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider.

"Protecting the environment is everyone's business. But we tend to forget that sometimes and thankfully, we have folks like you that always remind us about what's going to happen if we do or don't do things," said Hofschneider.

DEQ staff and other agency partners witnessed Hofschneider as he proclaimed April as Environmental Awareness Month and April 22 as CNMI Earth Day in a ceremony yesterday morning at the Governor's Conference Room at Capital Hill.

The proclamation, read by DEQ staffer Carlos Ketebengang, stated that every person has the right to a clean and healthful public environment in all areas as stipulated in Article I Section 9 of the CNMI constitution and implemented through the Commonwealth Environmental Protection Act.

"The Commonwealth Environmental Protection empowers [DEQ] within the Office of the Governor to develop, implement, and enforce the policies set forth in the Act. DEQ works with partner agencies and organizations such as [Coastal Resources Management], Forestry, [Division of Fish and Wildlife], and the National Park Service, [Mariana Islands Nature Alliance], and [Pacific Marine and Research Institute] to achieve these goals," stated the proclamation.

DEQ director Frank Rabauliman expressed hope that the community will take environmental stewardship seriously.

"It is really our responsibility to make sure that we continue our due diligence of protecting the environment because it's our health and those of the generations to come," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

The Environmental Awareness Month 2013 theme is "All life of the land, sea, and air are one" which translates to "Todo I nila'la i tano, tasi yan aire man uno" in Chamorro and "Alongaal malaaw wóól falúúw sáát me yáág nge re eew" in Carolinian.

The theme reinforces the people's responsibility "to maintain and protect our shared environment," urging everyone to do their part in enhancing the beauty of the islands and understanding that one's actions impact not just oneself but the environment.

The month-long celebration will feature various activities throughout April, including sea turtle tagging headed by DFW, film screenings, bird walk at the Last Command Post with the Micronesica Bird Conservation, Annual Environmental Expo, and Trash in Fashion Show at Hard Rock Café.

Culminating the Environmental Awareness Month observance is the island-wide clean-up, wherein throngs of civic groups, private companies, government agencies, and volunteer individuals are expected to pick up trash in different parts of the CNMI.

Hofschneider, who previously worked at DEQ, said he is pleased to see once again his former colleagues and urged everyone to take an active interest in protecting the environment for future organizations.

Yesterday's attendees had their photo taken by the monument erected by the DEQ in 1990 to commemorate Earth Day. Rabauliman said they began the tradition of remembering the significant monument last year.

FREE TRAINING COURSES!

CULTURA ATHLETICS, LLC

Cultura Athletics, LLC under a sub-award grant issued to the Marianas Resource Conservation & Development Council is able to provide the follow courses free of charge to U.S. eligible workers. Some courses also qualify for professional development credit with the CNMI Public School System.

BASKETBALL COURSES (Ada Gym)

Basketball Coaching Level 1		6:00pm-9:00pm	(5 Days)	April 08 - 13, 2013
Basketball 101	(@Tinian Gym)	4:00pm-7:00pm	(3 Days)	April 19, 2013
		8:00am-5:00pm		April 20, 2013
		10:00am-2:00pm		April 21, 2013

*To register for these courses and other info, please contact (670) 235-1775 or email: eli_rang@yahoo.com

Scoretable Officials	4:30pm-8:30pm	(3 Days)	April 9, 11, 13, 2013
Level "O"/1 Basketball Referee	4:30pm-8:30pm	(6 Days)	April 15 - 19, 2013
	8:30am-6:30pm		April 20, 2013

*To register for these courses and other info, please contact (670) 234-8604 or email: 731ekul@gmail.com
* Venue To be determined (TBD)

VOLLEYBALL COURSES

Coaching Mini Volleyball *For Elementary Schools	8:30am-2:30pm	(Daily)	April 9 - 12, 2013
Coaching Volleyball for Beginners *For Junior High Schools	8:30am-2:30pm	(Daily)	April 15 - 19, 2013

Indoor Referee	(Session 1)	4:30pm-8:30pm	(2 Days)	April 10 & 12, 2013
	(Session 2)	4:30pm-8:30pm	(2 Days)	April 23 & 25, 2013

*To register for these courses and other info, please contact (670) 234-8604 or email: 731ekul@gmail.com
* Venue To be determined (TBD)

ATHLETICS COURSES (Tinian High School Track & Field)

Intro to Athletics	4:00pm-8:00pm	(3 Days)	April 26, 2013
	8:00am-5:00pm		April 27, 2013
	10:00am-2:00pm		April 28, 2013

*To register for this course and other info, please contact (670) 235-1775 or email: eli_rang@yahoo.com

"This program is supported by federal funds in the amount of $145,000.00 under the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs, CNMI Economic and Labor Enhancement Program through a Sub-grant award from the CNMI Department of Commerce."

Judge denies teacher's request to participate in Fund hearing

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood has denied a Public School System teacher's request to participate at yesterday's hearing in retiree Betty Johnson's class action against the CNMI government.

Tydingco-Gatewood said having reviewed Ms. Phyllis M. Ain's emergency motion, the court is of the opinion that Ain's position with regard to Public Laws 17-82 and 18-02 is consistent with the position advocated by the CNMI government.

The judge said for purposes of the hearing, Ain's interests can be adequately protected and represented by the Office of the Attorney General, counsel for the CNMI government, and therefore her request to participate at the hearing is denied.

As previously stated, Tydingco-Gatewood said the court will continue to hold Ain's motion to intervene in abeyance until the settlement process in Johnson's lawsuit is completed.

Ain stated that her interests—and the interests of active employees—are not adequately represented or protected by any current party to this lawsuit.

Ain is a member of the Fund's Defined Benefit Plan. She seeks to terminate her membership in the Fund and recover her employee contributions as provided by Public Laws 17-82 and 18-2. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Tim Villagomez due back on Saipan for resentencing

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Villagomez

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona yesterday issued an order directing the U.S. Marshal to transport to Saipan for resentencing former lieutenant governor Timothy P. Villagomez, who is currently in federal prison after being found guilty of defrauding the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. through needless purchases of a de-scaling chemical.

Manglona ordered the U.S. Marshal to notify the court promptly when Villagomez arrives in the CNMI.

The judge set the resentencing of Villagomez for June 12, 2013 at 9am.

Manglona ordered the U.S. Probation Office to prepare an amended presentence report and sentencing recommendation.

The parties are given no later than June 5, 2013 to submit their sentencing recommendations and any objections to the amended presentence report.

Manglona said that, on Dec. 18, 2012, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit vacated Villagomez's sentence and remanded for new sentencing proceedings.

The Ninth Circuit ordered the federal court to conduct a new sentencing after finding that the court made a mistake in calculating his sentence.

With the new sentencing, there is a possibility that the former lieutenant governor would face more jail time.

In August 2009, then U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex Munson sentenced Villagomez to seven years and three months in prison, and sentenced his co-defendants former Commerce secretary James A. Santos and his wife, Joaquina V. Santos, each to six years and six months in jail. The Santos couple is also currently serving their sentences in federal prison.

The case came to be called the Rydlyme scandal, after the de-scaling chemical's brand name.

Mirano tested twice positive for 'ice' use

Mirano

Earl Eric Mirano, a man who was sentenced to 142 days time served for forging and then cashing stale CNMI tax refund checks, was tested twice positive for using methamphetamine or "ice."

According to a report filed on Monday by the U.S. Probation Office in the U.S. District Court for the NMI, on March 13, 2013, Mirano tested presumptive positive for "ice" use at the U.S. Probation Office.

Mirano denied using "ice" and the specimen was sent to the laboratory for further analysis.

A probation officer said that, on March 24, 2013, laboratory results indicated that the specimen was positive for "ice" use.

The probation officer also disclosed that, on March 18, 2013, the Marianas Counseling Services reported that Mirano had tested presumptive positive for "ice" use.

The probation officer said Mirano admitted in writing that he had used the drug on March 15.

At a noncompliance meeting at the U.S. Probation Office on March 19, Mirano was admonished for his behavior and warned that continued violation could result in a sanction or revocation of his supervised release.

The probation officer said Mirano showed a copy of an immigration judge order, directing him to voluntarily depart from the CNMI on or before April 18, 2013 at his own expense.

Mirano will be departing from Saipan to Manila, Philippines on April 12, 2013.

The probation officer said Mirano will be closely monitored and any further violation will be reported to the court.

Mirano was found guilty in July 2012 of conspiracy to commit bank fraud and bank fraud for cashing old CNMI tax refund checks. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MHS allowing late orders of graduation items

Marianas High School is now allowing late orders for graduation items (cap, gown, tassel, diploma, and cover) until April 5, 2013, 1pm. Those interested must pay at least half of the total amount they are ordering. MHS said this is the last and final order for all graduation materials. Orders will be placed on April 5, 2013, but there is no guarantee that the items will arrive on time.

If you have any questions, call the Main Office at 237-3206. ***(PR)***

Brass Studio Recital at UOG April 7

University of Guam Fine Arts faculty will be performing a Brass Studio Recital on Sunday, April 7 at 3PM in the UOG Fine Arts Theater. Admission is free and open to the public.

The recital will feature the Horn Quartet of the Guam Symphony, which is directed by UOG's own Dr. Stephen Bednarzyk and the UOG Low Brass Trio, which includes Bob Schlub on French horn, Troy McVey on tuba and Jeffrey Meyer on tuba. The trio will be accompanied by Stephen Bednarzyk on piano.

For more information, contact Dr. Jeffrey Meyer at jmeyer@uguam.uog.edu. ***(PR)***

Bereaved Families Support Group meeting on April 4

A group that is in the process of forming a Compassionate Friends chapter in Saipan will be holding their monthly grief support meeting on Thursday, April 4, from 6pm to 7:30 pm in the NMPASI conference room on Middle Road in Gualo Rai.

We offer understanding and hope to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents who are grieving the loss of a child of any age, and from any cause. We provide a safe, confidential setting, in which to share our experiences, while respecting and supporting each other, and listening. We have "been there." We do not espouse any specific religious or philosophical ideology. There is no "right way" to grieve, and family members are welcome to come to share or just to listen.

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others to be supportive. Today more than 600 chapters serving all 50 states plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and Guam offer friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents and other family members during the natural grieving process after a child has died.

For more information, call Jill Derickson at 287-5337 or e-mail jilld@pticom.com. To learn more about The Compassionate Friends, visit their website at www.compassionatefriends.org. ***(PR)***

Åmoţ Måkpung Åmku' yan Åmot Tininu now available

The Inetnon Åmot yan Kutturan Natibu/Mwiischil Safey me Kkoor Aramasal Falúw says that ready-to-be-boiled, packaged Åmot Måkpung Åmku' yan Åmot Tininu is available at the Saipan Chamorro-Carolinian Cultural Center at 1213 on Capitol Hill Road, across the Workforce Investment Agency and next to the CNMI Board of Parole Office. A $10 donation per package is accepted. The office hours are Monday to Friday, from 10am to 5pm. For more information, call 322-0278. ***(PR)***

UOG to host Marianas History Conference

The 2013 Marianas History Conference, "One Archipelago, Many Stories: Integrating Our Narratives," will be held in Guam on Aug. 30-31, 2013. Abstracts for papers and posters may be submitted at guampedia.com by April 3, 2013. The Guampedia website also accepts conference registration with an early registration fee of $25 or $10 for students with a valid ID. The number of registrants will be capped at 220. Late registration is $40.

For more information, visit www.guampedia.com/the-2nd-marianas-history-conference, or contact Dr. Anne Perez Hattori (ahattori@uguam.uog.edu) or Dr. Michael Clement (mclement@uguam.uog.edu). ***(UOG)***

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The Bridge Project @ 287-7037.
Or Sign up on our website
http://bridge.marianas.us
The Bridge Project is funded through a grant from the Office of Insular Affairs and the NMI Department of Commerce

Samoa MP proposes method to deal with stray dogs

APIA, Samoa (Samoa Observer/PIR)—An Associate Minister has asked the Samoa's Government to look at exporting dog meat as a way of solving the country's stray dog problem.

Member of Parliament for A'ana Alofi No 1, Tole'afoa Apulu Fa'afisi made the point in Parliament on Wednesday during the discussion of the Canine Control Bill 2013. If passed into the law, the bill will require all dogs to be licensed. It would also allow for the prosecution of owners who do not comply.

The suggestion from Tole'afoa was widely supported. The MP also called for a dog race so that members of the public will be encouraged to pick the dogs off the street that they see will win them some money.

"We have spent a lot of time on this bill but it's about dogs," said Tole'afoa. "Rather than spending money on dogs, how about we use their meat to get money?

"Put them in cans and export them. Looking after other farm animals is also expensive maybe we can grind their meat to feed farm animals?"

Minister of Finance, Faumuina Tiatia Liuga agreed. He said "there is no difference between the meat of a pig and that of a dog.

"When it gets cold in Asia, the moment you eat dog meat, you feel warm afterwards."

The MP for Gagaemauga no 2 Levaopolo Talatonu said the ruling Government should sample the meat first.

"I support the idea," Levao said, adding that a dog race would be wonderful.

"In other countries they have a lot of dog races and it makes money," he said. "If we have the same thing here, people would be quick to take those dogs in town under their care so they can take them to the race to earn money."

But MP Opposition Leader Palusalue Fa'apo II had a different approach. According to the MP for Safata, the answer to the problem is putting down stray dogs.

Referring to the number of tourists, Palusalue said there are a lot more stray dogs than tourists.

"Stray dogs are a big problem in town so why can't we use the law to put them down?" he said. "There is always reference that it's regulated by police but they are not doing anything about it so I suggest that they be put down."

Minister of Police, Sala Fata Pinati said this would be inhumane.

"We should look for solutions that are suitable for our country and in the eyes for the international community," said Sala.

"There are ways that it can be done, like using an injection. We don't just walk to the market where there are a lot of stray dogs and start using a gun to shoot them.

"No, it's not like that. I have received a paper from the Attorney General and it says that you cannot put down a dog unless there is an order from court to do so."

Speaker La'auli Leuatea Polataivao Fosi was not taking the issue as a joke. Talking about his visit in New Zealand, Laauli said he saw an Asian man who had many bandages on his arms and legs.

"He told me it happened in Siumu. When he was walking on the beach, he was attacked by four or five dogs," Laauli told Parliament. "He told me he would never come back to Samoa.

"I was too ashamed to tell him I was the Speaker. It may seem like a joke for some but the bill addresses very serious issues."

In defense of his constituency, Siumu MP Tu'u'u Anasi'i Leota said some dogs are from Falealili.

MP for Salega, Afualo Wood Salele shared a different view. He emphasised the importance of dogs in many societies where they are recognized as "a man's friend".

Pointing to the legislation, he said it seems that the proposed bill will damage the special relationship that a man has with a dog that no other animal shares with people.

"Some dogs are pets and are like friends to a man, and my understanding is it looks like the bill is breaking this relationship.

"We should also know that dog are very useful guards to other families where dogs chase off burglars. Dogs are a man's friend."

The Canine Control Bill 2013 was passed in parliament on Wednesday.

The bill proposed to repeal the Dog Registration and control ordinance 1955 and to provide for the powers and duties of canine control officer under reformed arrangements in relation to canine control.

The Samoa police service will be responsible for the implementation of this Bill which the Service may carry out with the assistance of members of the Ministry responsible for health and members of recognized non-government organizations familiar with canine control.

The Bill essentially is an attempt to deal with the problem of stray and dangerous canines that pose a threat to the safety and health of the public.

Am. Samoa leadership urged to follow grant provisions

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (The Samoa News/PIR)—Senator Galeai Tu'ufuli is urging Governor Lolo Matalasi Moliga's administration to fully adhere to provisions for spending of federal grants because failure to do so will result in the American Samoa government having to make reimbursements to the grantor.

Galeai made the public call during a Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee hearing last Thursday where the governor's $5 million supplemental appropriations bill was discussed.

Among appropriations in the bill is $52,000 to reimburse disallowed grant expenditures for the Vocational Rehabilitation Office and $36,000 for reimbursement of disallowed spending under the AmeriCorps program.

Both programs are funded by federal grants and when questioned by Galeai about these two expenditures that will be funded with local revenue, ASG Treasurer Dr. Falema'o 'Phil' M. Pili says the funding request is necessary to pay the disallowed expenses.

(There were no follow up questions as to what the disallowed expenses were that ASG has to reimburse for the two programs.)

Galeai said these types of reimbursements should be a lesson learned for the new administration as these problems occurred during the past administration. He says the new government should fully adhere to provisions of how federal grants are spent because failure to do so, means local revenue - which is already stretched thin - will have to be used to pay back the grantor.

He said these problems will then end up coming to the Fono for approval, due to carelessness of ensuring full compliance.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Office is under the jurisdiction of the Governor's Office but details of the reimbursement remains unclear.

For AmeriCorps, this reimbursement first surfaced in January this year when Lolo wrote to Washington D.C. based Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS), the federal grantor for AmeriCorps, for additional information on the reimbursement.

Lolo also noted that his new administration plans to pay the reimbursement after reading a 2011 audit report, which outlines problems in the administration of AmeriCorps grants.

INOS

From Page 1

The governor's testimony appeared to surprise Johnson's lead counsel, Margery Bronster, and Tydingco-Gatewood, as this led to resolving the motion for clarification.

Public Law 17-82 allows the Fund members to withdraw the full amount of their contributions without separating from the government.

Public Law 18-2 that Inos signed last month compels the Fund to release up to 50 percent of members' contributions within 30 days of submitting a refund application.

"We should proceed with the settlement process," Inos stated in court. "I will personally participate in the discussions."

On the issue of implementation of Public Laws 17-82 and 18-2, the governor said they don't have control of Fund disbursements.

"We don't have the checks," he said.

In an interview with reporters after the hearing, Inos said he agrees to "hold in abeyance" the implementation of the two subject public laws because they want to proceed with the settlement negotiations in good faith.

"If we don't do this, the process is going to be protracted. Settlement discussions would expedite matters," he said.

On the issue of lack of actuarial study conducted in passing the two subject public laws, Inos said Public Law 18-2 was enacted because of the Fund's concern on Public Law 17-82, and that throughout the deliberations there was no request presented to perform actuarial study.

"I don't think this is relevant anymore unless the number of people in the Defined Benefit system were active employees will amount to a significant number," Inos said.

With the Executive Branch, the governor said, there are only about a hundred people who have not requested for termination of their membership.

"That's a very small number. And if any actuarial report were to be done, we're using those folks in the calculation. Because those are the folks that have not retired and some estimation will have to be made to determine the impact on the Fund even when they retired," he said.

Inos said the whole premise of Public Laws 17-82 and 18-2 is to focus on annual payment.

Inos said after they remove the liability pertaining to employees if they have terminated membership, then the only folks that will be left in the system will be the retirees.

Inos said for the retirees they know the total amount that are needed to pay them in annual basis.

"Based on that amount we can then formulate a plan, a funding mechanism that should be sufficient and adequate to provide for these payments on annual basis," he said.

"That's what I mean by the whole landscape has changed from an actuary based pension system to just to an annuity," he said.

Bronster said she was really grateful that Inos showed up and answered questions.

"I think but the most exciting thing about it is that he was willing to work with us and commit to negotiating in good faith and that was really important," Bronster said.

The lawyer said their concern was that if the government was going to be passing laws and taking actions that were going to undermine the settlement process, then they have a problem with it.

"And I was very pleased that the governor agreed to give the settlement process a shot and we'll see," she said.

Assistant attorney general Reena Patel, counsel for the CNMI government, disclosed that the settlement process has been moving along.

"The government is taking the settlement process seriously," Patel said.

Patel also mentioned, among other things, that the $10 million line-item appropriation is a guarantee that the government is doing its best to resolve the Fund problems.

BUDGET

From Page 1

The governor postponed his budget submission to the Legislature, pending a joint leadership meeting rescheduled for 1:30pm today on Capital Hill.

Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Hofschneider will meet with the Senate and House of Representatives mainly to discuss revenue-generating measures that could help save the NMI Retirement Fund and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. as well as lower power and water rates.

Rep. Tony Sablan (IR-Saipan), chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said they remain hopeful that the economy will improve and that the government will generate more revenue to go towards public services such as those related to health, safety, and education.

CIP funds

Hofschneider, who oversees capital improvement projects, said yesterday that he will also be meeting with Tinian officials today to identify priority CIPs for Tinian.

He said these include paving the way for direct flights to come to Tinian from Asian countries to help boost the island's tourism.

"We need to find out…the other infrastructure that's needed. For example, I'm aware there are issues with the arrival and departure terminal. I want to find out the status of that. We also want to find out if we really do need a fuel farm or isotainers to allow refueling capability for Tinian in case the aircraft come in from Asian destinations," Hofschneider said in an interview with reporters after signing proclamations on Capital Hill yesterday morning.

The Tinian leadership is also prioritizing solid waste issues. Hofschneider said the transfer station project design, for example, has been completed, while the landfill project design is some 60 percent complete.

The lieutenant governor will also be meeting with Rota leaders tentatively on Friday to also identify priority projects.

He said among priority projects are those concerning the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. also because of federal compliance issues.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) said yesterday there remains over $50 million in unspent CIP money.

The administration has yet to issue its own data. Hofschneider said for FY 2013, there's some $8.3 million in CIP money for the CNMI.

CHC

From Page 1

"As part of the market-oriented charges, all fees start at base or actual price and a percentage above purchased priced for profitability," said Babauta, adding that actual cost of providing services is based on Medicare Cost Report performed every year.

The cost structures for certain room rates, he added, were based on relative value unit (RVU) as guided by the Medicare Cost Report.

"Included in the fee structure is a sliding fee schedule for those who cannot afford to pay so that they continue to have access to health care services at CHC," added Babauta.

The corporation implemented last year an emergency regulation that increased the hospital fees and services up to 300 percent which insurance firms described as significantly higher than Guam and other states.

Babauta admitted to *Saipan Tribune* that discounted rates will be provided to health insurance firms for the new fees enforced on hospital services and supplies.

The health insurance carriers, in its formal requests to the corporation in September, recommended to immediately replace the announce fee increased with a 20 percent across-the-board increase and plan for minimal adjustments in future years based on true hospital rate setting calculations, or 50 percent discount to health insurance carriers as alternatives. A decision is expected to be reached within the month.

Ex-Senate president Manglona now Hofschenider's special adviser

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Former Senate president Paul A. Manglona, the longest serving lawmaker in the CNMI up until January this year, is back in government as Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider's special adviser effective last March 11.

Hofschneider and Manglona separately confirmed the appointment yesterday, adding that the term is at least up to the end of fiscal year 2013 with an option for renewal, as with other employment contracts.

Manglona's per annum salary at his new post is $50,000, according to him and Hofschneider.

"I chose him simply because of his extensive knowledge in the government of the CNMI. His services encompass advice on policy issues, and also assist the governor's office and lieutenant governor's office in seeing through the CIP projects are pushed through accordingly, working with the CIP Office. Also we would like that we use his ability to communicate with the Legislature in terms of legislation and other issues we can steer the CNMI forward. He can assist the administration with this great wealth of experience," Hofschneider told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview after proclamation signings on Capital Hill.

Manglona

Manglona is not an independent contractor, but a government employee.

When Manglona was Senate president during his last term in the 17th Legislature, Hofschneider was Senate vice president.

Manglona, in a separate interview, said he welcomes working with Hofschneider whom he describes as hard-working and has the CNMI's best interest at heart.

He said under the Inos administration, "we have many things to be hopeful for" and hopes that he can contribute to moving the CNMI forward including issues related to capital improvement projects, the pension system, health, and utilities.

"There are lots of challenges but we're hopeful with the cooperation of everyone, the administration and the Legislature, we can do a lot of things for the people," Manglona added.

After some 25 years in the Legislature, Manglona lost his latest re-election bid on Nov. 6, 2012 to former representative and now Senate vice president Victor B. Hocog (R-Rota).

Inos appoints 1 to Civil Service Commission

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Eloy S. Inos appointed on Monday Felicitas "Tee" P. Abraham to serve as a member of the Civil Service Commission, representing Saipan. Her appointment requires the Senate's advice and consent.

If confirmed, Abraham will serve a date-specific term that runs with Inos' term as governor.

"Because the terms of the commissioners are staggered, your term will expire on my term as governor," Inos said in his April 1 letter appointing Abraham. Abraham is a former director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

As a governor's appointee, Abraham is immediately required to file a statement of financial interest with the Office of the Public Auditor, a copy of her resume, police clearance, drug test receipt and drug test result for submission to the Senate.

"The lieutenant governor and I are confident that you are qualified and will be an asset to this important commission," the governor added.

» As Senate panel holds public hearing on MPLT board nominee

Public hearing

In other news, the Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations held a public hearing yesterday on another governor's appointee, former senator Maria Frica T. Pangelinan, to serve as a member of the Marianas Public Land Trust board of trustees.

The EAGI panel, led by Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), received oral testimonies from members of the public, all of whom testified in favor of Pangelinan's nomination.

Pangelinan holds a bachelor's degree in business administration with concentration in management. As the CNMI's first female senator, she chaired the critical Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee and advocated stringent fiscal reforms during her term in office. She has held a variety of positions in multiple disciplines of business operations and government services.

The former senator was also an elected delegate to the Second Constitutional Convention, was a member of the Saipan Zoning Board, the Northern Marianas College's Board of Regents, and served as a representative in the Covenant Section 902 negotiations.

'Requiring businesses to connect to CUC could cut rates by 5%'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Rep. Tony Sablan (IR-Saipan) said yesterday that if all commercial businesses such as hotels are connected to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. power grid, it may result in some 5 percent reduction in utility rates because fuel bought by CUC will be used to its maximum. Sablan's bill requiring mandatory hookup to CUC is now being reviewed not only by a House committee but also by the largest business organization in the CNMI.

"The 5 percent rate cut is just a rough estimate as CUC is still doing an assessment on this. The bill was introduced and referred to committee for review. Hopefully it will get comments from everyone concerned," Sablan told *Saipan Tribune.*

Many commercial businesses including hotels have been off the CUC power grid, and have been using their own generators to supply power to their respective businesses primarily.

Sablan, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, introduced House Bill 18-41 last week. House Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero (IR-Saipan) referred the bill to the Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications Committee.

Richard Pierce, executive director of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, separately said yesterday that HB 18-14 has been referred to the organization's Government Relations Committee "for a Thursday committee session and the Board, I would assume, will submit comments similar to what has been submitted in the past."

Sablan said CUC has taken necessary steps to improve its generators to supply current and future rate payers at maximum capacity.

He said commercial businesses such as hotels are "putting their guests' health and safety at risk" by using their generators as the primary source of power and by not being connected to the CUC power grid "should a disaster (power failure) occur."

"Furthermore, the Legislature finds that these commercial businesses may cause environmental concerns such as noise and air pollution and possible fuel spill that will attract the attention of the Environmental Protection Agency which would cost commercial businesses at the least in the tens of thousands," Sablan said in his bill.

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MVA to launch 'China Mission' in May

»Chinese travelers projected as islands' fastest growing inbound market in 2013

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI, through the Marianas Visitors Authority, will launch next month its first-ever "China Mission," an initiative to tap a greater number of Chinese travelers to the islands this fiscal year.

Marketing expert Michael Merner disclosed that the program is the first of its kind promotional strategy to be launched in China, which this year is considered the fastest growing major economy in the world.

Slated for May 6-12 this year, the sales mission is to host travel trade events to develop relationships with Chinese tour operators.

"This is never done before and it's brand new. This is the best time to come to China and talk to travel agents and the media so we can promote the CNMI," said Merner before an audience made up mostly of lawmakers and travel partners during Thursday's membership meeting of MVA.

Merner disclosed that compared to key markets Japan and Korea, the CNMI remains unknown to China travel agents up to this day.

"Unlike Korea and Japan markets that really know about CNMI, in China, the travel agents still don't know us. A huge amount of baseline training and education is badly needed…that's why we have several trade shows to sell CNMI for the first time," revealed Merner.

According to Merner, China's international outbound travel last fiscal year 2012 reached 80 million which reflects a 14-percent growth over 2011 record levels. The U.N. World Tourism Organization projected that China will generate 100 million international travelers by 2015. In 1995, China outbound travels was only at 7 million.

Based on MVA's forecast, arrivals from China in FY 2013 will reach 91,800—or 20 percent of the total projected arrivals from all market destinations. Japan and Korea account almost 70 percent of the total CNMI arrivals.

"All economic indicators will drive strong continued growth in outbound travel from China to the CNMI in 2013," said Merner.

At present, the CNMI has six weekly flights from Shanghai and Guangzhou; and three new weekly direct non-stop flights from Beijing launched by Century Tours with China Eastern starting on Nov. 15.

Merner revealed that MVA China office anticipates the launch of additional service from China to Saipan in 2013 from secondary cities such as Shenyang and Tianjin. If this happens, arrivals from the destination is projected a dramatic growth of 16 percent this fiscal year.

No visitation on Rota

Merner disclosed that due to inadequate promotional campaigns to sell the CNMI to China market, no Chinese tourist has visited Rota to this date.

He urged the development of a travel agent consortium to sell Rota tour packages with travel agents and partners.

The MVA China Office will also participate in major travel shows to raise the visibility of the CNMI among key travel agent groups and to avid Chinese leisure travelers.

Saipan Tribune learned that most Chinese take vacations during Lunar New Year holidays in January or February and National Day's Holidays in October. Summer school holidays—from July to August—are also peak seasons for outbound travel.

To better promote the islands, Merner said that CNMI must also be sold to travelers as a sports paradise with beautiful nature, instead of just another beach resort.

More establishments must also be developed as research shows that 75 percent of Chinese travelers are also frequent shoppers. Like in the other markets, lack of hotel rooms available on island is also considered a challenge for most Chinese travelers.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MOBIL SPONSORSHIP
Mobil Oil Marianas territory manager Thomas Hernandez, second from right, presented a $3,000 check on March 29, 2013, at Marianas Seaside Circuit to the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands for major sponsorship of the Inaugural Budweiser Go Kart Championship on April 6, 2013. Pictured from left are HANMI board member Abner Acosta, HANMI vice chair Gloria Cavanagh, Hernandez, and HANMI treasurer Michael Johnson.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP13-DCCA/HPO-095

SUBMISSION: APRIL 23, 2013 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"PROPOSED CHALAN KANOA HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY, SAIPAN, CNMI A PROJECT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE"

THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON AFTER MARCH 27, 2013 AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DRIVE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ALL INQUIRES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO **MS. LAURA T. OGUMORO**, ACTING SECRETARY OF DCCA AT (670) 664-2574/76, OR FAX TO (670) 664-2547 **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, APRIL 12, 2013.**

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN A BID/PROPOSAL IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH. ALL BID/PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT

/S/ LAURA T. OGUMORO
ACTING SECRETARY OF DCCA

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP13-DCCA/HPO-097

SUBMISSION: APRIL 23, 2013 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"CONSULTING ARCHAELOGIST SERVICES, A PROJECT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE"

THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON AFTER MARCH 27, 2013 AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DRIVE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ALL INQUIRES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO **MS. LAURA T. OGUMORO**, ACTING SECRETARY OF DCCA AT (670) 664-2574/76, OR FAX TO (670) 664-2547 **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, APRIL 12, 2013.**

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/S/ LAURA T. OGUMORO
ACTING SECRETARY OF DCCA

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP13-DCCA/HPO-096

SUBMISSION: APRIL 23, 2013 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"TO CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT ON THE STATE INVENTORY SYSTEM, PHASE I, A PROJECT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE"

THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON AFTER MARCH 27, 2013 AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DRIVE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ALL INQUIRES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO **MS. LAURA T. OGUMORO**, ACTING SECRETARY OF DCCA AT (670) 664-2574/76, OR FAX TO (670) 664-2547 **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, APRIL 12, 2013.**

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/S/ LAURA T. OGUMORO
ACTING SECRETARY OF DCCA

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP13-DCCA/HPO-099

SUBMISSION: APRIL 23, 2013 • TIME: 2:00 P.M.

"CONSULTING HISTORIAN SERVICES, A PROJECT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE"

THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON AFTER MARCH 27, 2013 AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DRIVE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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/S/ LAURA T. OGUMORO
ACTING SECRETARY OF DCCA

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

April declared Autism Awareness Month

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider is flanked by members of the Autism Society of the CNMI and the Developmental Disabilities network on Tuesday at the Governor's Conference Room following the proclamation signing declaring April as Autism Awareness Month.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider yesterday proclaimed April as Autism Awareness Month and called on the community to learn more about autism, allowing them to play a vital role in providing a caring environment for those diagnosed with the "complex and not well-understood" disability.

With 1 out of 50 Americans aged 6 to 17 years old diagnosed with autism, Hofschneider emphasized that spreading awareness on autism is vital in the Commonwealth to enable those diagnosed with autism and other related spectrum disorders reach their full potential.

Officers and members of the Autism Society of the CNMI, along with the Developmental Disabilities network members and supporters, witnessed the signing of the proclamation read by ASCNMI's Frank Cabrera at the Governor's Conference Room in Capital Hill.

Tuesday's proclamation signing was only the first as the ASCNMI is also scheduled to have a proclamation signing on Tinian and Rota led by their respective Mayor's offices, said ASCNMI secretary Thomas Thornburgh.

Thornburgh noted that the month-long celebration began on April 1 with scheduled interviews and site visits to various public schools.

Monday's highlight was the autism training attended by 94 caregivers and teachers. The training was conducted by visiting expert Kandis Lighthall from the University of California, Davis. Lighthall is an award-winning educator who has travelled extensively to provide trainings and has authored several publications.

Lighthall also conducted yesterday's autism training for parents held at Fiesta Resort & Spa. Thornburgh said the training focused on helping their children overcoming the barriers to become successful in their community.

After the proclamation signing, Lighthall presented Hofschneider with autism awareness bracelets in various colors received autism awareness bracelets in various colors and lauded the ASCNMI for being a "wonderful organization."

"You're doing a great job here," added Lighthall.

The ASCNMI promotes, protects, and advocates the rights of those with autism with the help of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities, the University Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities of the Northern Marianas College, and the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy System Inc.

Thornburgh, projects specialist for NMPASI, said the trainings, along with other activities, will be extended to Tinian and Rota as part of the month-long observance of Autism Awareness Month.

Hart vows to fill key vacancies at NMC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Northern Marianas College president Sharon Y. Hart, Ph.D, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that she will fill key vacancies at the institution including the positions of chief financial officer and information technology director.

The hiring of qualified candidates for the two posts are included in the checklist provided by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges which will decide the fate of NMC in its assembly slated in January next year.

The president said new recruits are expected to be known very soon.

"The recruitment process for these two positions, and other key positions at the college, are well underway. We expect to be announcing new appointments within the week," said Hart.

As part of its efforts to meet accreditation standards and recommendations, Hart disclosed that NMC has moved quickly to resolve the issues raised in the recent action letter from the accreditation commission.

Hart

One of these issues involves the hiring of a CFO and IT director, vacancies the college announced a few weeks ago.

The CFO is the primary financial manager of the institution and shares responsibility with the president and other college administrators for the management and safeguarding of the college's assets. Responsibilities include overseeing the college's finance office, the budget office, auxiliary services such as the NMC Bookstore, the procurement and property management office, and other areas.

The CFO will report directly to the President.

Meantime, the director of information technology provides leadership for the planning and implementation of information technology services and programs to support the learning mission of the college. The director will oversee the development of technology resources to support and improve the college's instructional and administrative programs and services.

According to Hart, to address other accreditation concerns, members of the college community continue to work in teams to prepare the Oct. 15, 2013 show-cause report and to ensure that its contents accurately reflect the college's progress in meeting accreditation standards and eligibility requirements.

According to NMC accreditation liaison officer Amanda Allen, NMC will be reporting all these accomplishments in the show cause report due in October.

"Although much work remains to be done, we have made considerable progress in addressing the issues that were raised by the ACCJC in its show-cause order. We look forward to reporting all of our accomplishments in the show-cause report that's due in October," added Allen.

House panel eyes oversight hearing on NMC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The chairperson of the education and health committee of the House of Representatives disclosed yesterday that the panel may call an oversight hearing covering various issues at the Northern Marianas College.

Rep. Roman Benavente (IR-Saipan) yesterday expressed his concern on the status of work being done by the institution in addressing all deficiencies cited by the accreditation commission that earlier slapped NMC the severe sanction of show-cause status.

NMC must submit by Oct. 15 this year its show-cause report justifying why its accreditation should not be revoked. Besides this document, the college was also required to provide the commission a closure plan in the event the institution closes its doors.

Benavente described the existing issues surrounding the college as very serious that merits immediate action from all concerned.

He emphasized the islands' need to have a community college of its own that will continue to serve students in three islands. "We need to find out if the college is progressing in terms of completing the required documentations by the accreditation commission," said Benavente.

The panel chair said those invited in the oversight hearing include members of the NMC Board of Regents, president Sharon Y. Hart, Ph.D, and college deans and employees who are expected to provide the committee all information that it may need in the hearing.

As of yesterday, no schedule has been finalized for the planned oversight hearing, but Benavente vowed he will push for this and expressed optimism that the committee members can finalize a hearing date soon.

Benavente admitted that among the issues that deeply concern him is the uncertainty of the NMC leadership, following disclosure that the Board of Regents has yet to decide whether it will renew or not the president's contract which is expiring on July 5.

"It's an issue that needs to be addressed immediately because it's a question of instability… and we would like to know what are the board's plan (on this matter)," said Benavente, adding that the college budget will also one of the major issues that will be tackled in the planned oversight hearing.

The Board of Regents proposed a $6.3-million budget for fiscal year 2014. The amount is comprised of the following: $5.571 million for personnel and benefits; $700,000 for utilities; and $55,712 for all others. Of the figure, the hiring of 11 critically needed positions for accreditation are factored in. Among these positions are the chief financial administrative officer, information technology director and support staff, and other administrative capacities.

The FY '14 budget submission indicated 118 FTEs of which 107 are currently filled. The total 118 FTEs is a drastic drop from last year's 155 FTEs of which 130 were filled.

NMC has two main funding sources—from local appropriation mainly for its personnel salaries and tuition fees from students, which covers for the college operations and other programs.

FIVB Grassroots Beach Volleyball FREE Development Training Course
APRIL 3 - 7, 2013, SAIPAN

This course is designed for National Federations, or simply beach volleyball enthusiasts willing to develop further beach volleyball in their respective countries. The course provides an insight into the world of beach volleyball and teaches fundamental issues like how to create and to organize beach volleyball competitions. The course covers also the latest rules and regulations as well as informing on the necessary structure for beach volleyball. The objectives of the Beach get Involved Courses are the following:

- To improve the knowledge and competence of Beach Volleyball players, referees and promoters
- To present the most recent trends in Beach Volleyball
- To motivate and stimulate National Federations to develop national courses and an internal method of training

Recommended for phys/ed teachers, coaches, parents and players who want to learn more. CNMI PSS approved Professional Development for 31-contact hours. Full course details at www.nmivolleyball.org/clinics.

To sign up send an email to training.programs@nmivolleyball.org or call 483-7499

Schedule

- Wed & Thur, April 3 & 4, 4:00-9:00pm, Fiesta Resort & Spa Azucena Room 1, light snacks & refreshments provided
- Friday, April 5, 4:00-6:00pm, Fiesta Resort & Spa beachside; 6:00-9:00pm, MHS Gym weight room, carpooling available
- Sat & Sun, April 6 & 7, 8:00am to 5:00pm, Fiesta Resort & Spa beachside**

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NMC encourages career exploration early

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Northern Marianas College Career Center manager Neda C. Deleon Guerrero delivers her remarks during Tuesday's meeting of the Rotary Club of Saipan at Hyatt Regency Saipan.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College encourages early "career exploration" among students to provide them the skills and guidance they need for their future employment.

Neda C. Deleon Guerrero, NMC Career Center manager, said yesterday that the lone community college in the Commonwealth has partnered with the Public School System so that students can begin their career exploration between kindergarten and grade 12 levels

Deleon Guerrero, who was guest speaker at the Rotary Club of Saipan meeting at Hyatt Regency Saipan, said NMC and PSS separately conduct the Kuder assessment, a free evaluation tool for students to aid them in identifying their career path.

She said the assessment results from NMC and PSS are compared to establish whether or not the students need additional guidance in their career direction.

According to Deleon Guerrero, their current Kuder assessment reveals that the top five careers for students are in the fields of education, human services, hospitality, criminal justice, and health services.

She said NMC data shows that in the spring semester alone, eight students are expected to graduate with a degree in hospitality management, nine in computer, seven in business management, six in accounting, 35 in nursing, and 34 in education.

The need to prepare NMC students for the workforce is the concept behind the NMC Career Center, said Deleon Guerrero.

NMC Career Center provides an on-campus site for students to explore and pursue their career goals through career advising. It allows students to explore and apply for various job openings, including internships and work study positions on campus.

The center is slated to host Career Fair 2013 on April 18 from 9am to noon at Room D-1.

Deleon Guerrero said the annual event is free and open to the public and will feature exhibitors comprised of government agencies, private businesses, profit and nonprofit organizations.

"The Career Fair will be a great opportunity for those who are "undecided" on the kind of career they want to pursue," she added.

Deleon Guerrero said that besides the actual Career Fair, the NMC Center also planned several workshops—from resume writing and interview to employer's expectations and employee rights—designed to help participants in their quest for the right career.

Presenters would include "key community partners," including the Society for Human Resource Management, Department of Public Safety, U.S. Department of Labor, and executives from the private sector.

Deleon Guerrero said that while the NMC Career Center does not stay in touch with the job-seeking participants, it does connect with the exhibitors or potential employers a year after the career fair to find out if they hired any NMC students.

She revealed that only less than half of those who were employed because of the event remain in their jobs after one year. Deleon Guerrero noted that the number one reason for this is that many of the positions were lost due to company closure or layoffs.

Another reason, she added, is that these employees receive other employment offers. "Because the pay is higher, they're more likely to transfer. So we need to build on more specialized skills and take a look at the pay grade. That's the second leading factor to why they leave their job."

Deleon Guerrero invited the public to join the 2013 Career Fair.

"Space is limited. Reservations are on a first come, first served basis. All events will be on campus. This will be an opportunity to mingle with other community members that will be there," she said.

For more information, visit www.nmcnet.edu or call 234-5498 ext. 1313.

Rotary gears up to label, distribute dictionaries to 3rd graders

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Rotary Club of Saipan is ready to put labels on the dictionaries they will donate to third grade public school students in the CNMI.

Rotary vice president Laila Boyer said in yesterday's meeting that they have approved the label which contains the adopted version of Rotary International's 4-Way Test, "In work and play: Tell the truth, Be Fair, Be Helpful, Think of Others."

The label would also inscribe "My personal dictionary to keep and help me learn as much as I can" and "Donated by Rotary Club of Saipan" as well as bear the logo for Rotary International District 2750, the regional group to which the local chapter belongs.

Boyer said the labeling task will be completed by Rotarians within the week while the distribution of the dictionaries to students on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota will be undertaken throughout the month.

This is the third year that Rotary Club of Saipan is doing the dictionary project to promote education and literacy among third graders who are at the age when they can better absorb information from reference materials.

Some 800 students received the dictionaries in school year 2010 to 2011 while another 1,000 students became recipients in SY 2011-2012.

Six rescued after vessel sinks off Maui

HONOLULU—Six fishermen are safe after their vessel began taking on water and sank approximately two miles off the coast of Kahoolawe, Maui, Monday.

Coast Guard Sector Honolulu watchstanders received a radio call from the captain of the 43-foot charter fishing vessel Piper at 12 p.m. The captain reported the vessel was sinking and passengers were putting on lifejackets. The six people aboard the Piper abandoned ship and climbed into a life raft.

A crew aboard a 45-foot Response Boat-Medium from Coast Guard Station Maui was launched. Watchstanders issued an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast over VHF marine radio channel 16 to notify other vessels in the area of the emergency and the need for immediate assistance. The crew aboard the recreational vessel Misti III responded and rescued the passengers and crew. The Misti III transported the six survivors to Ma'alaea Harbor where emergency medical services met them. No serious injuries were reported.

The vessel sank in approximately 1,200 feet of water and has an unspecified amount of diesel fuel aboard. The Coast Guard will continue to monitor the situation for any evidence of pollution or debris from the vessel. No pollution is currently visible. The sinking is under investigation and is being treated as a serious marine incident by the Coast Guard.

Mariners are reminded to have all required safety equipment aboard their vessels. Marine incidents can occur quickly and without warning. In this instance, a marine VHF radio, lifejackets and a life raft played critical roles in ensuring the survival of the passengers and crew of the Piper.

For more information about boating safety equipment visit http://www.uscgboating.org.

For more information on this case contact Lt. Kevin Cooper, Coast Guard Sector Honolulu public affairs officer, at 808-842-2657. ***(USCG)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Apr. 3, 2004

House asks MPLA to designate car racing lot

The CNMI Legislature adopted Thursday a joint resolution asking the Marianas Public Lands Authority to grant the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs a portion of public land in Marpi for car racing. House Joint Resolution 14-11, introduced by Rep. Claudio Norita, identifies a 48,000 sq-meter lot in Marpi, adjacent to the Marpi Landfill, which can be used for car racing events. "The area would be conducive to staging the racing events and allow for the expansion of the current racing area to include public parking, boys and girls racing tracks, and other essential amenities," the resolution read.

House lauds Guerrero, Tan

House Rep. Timothy Villagomez paid tribute to Guam Business magazine's Executive of the Year Juan "Pan" T. Deleon Guerrero during a brief ceremony Thursday at the lower house. Villagomez handed Guerrero a plaque of recognition for his untiring sense of community spirit and his involvement in the business community. "Whether he is sitting behind his desk running his many businesses, hacking away on some golf course or selling tickets for the American Red Cross Club 200, Juan never looks tired. He seems to be always ready to tackle new challenges, take on a new adventure," the representative said.

Apr. 3, 2005

Babauta, 17 others change cell phone provider

Gov. Juan N. Babauta and 17 other Executive Branch officials have switched mobile phone services from Verizon to SaipanCell, effective last Friday. Press secretary Peter A. Callaghan denied that politics was behind the shift in phone service providers. He also denied that it was the administration's response to the recent sale of Verizon to Pacific Telecommunications Inc., which the governor had strongly opposed. "It has nothing to do with it. It's an act to save money and that's the whole reason for the switch," said Callaghan. "It's not political. We got a good deal." Callaghan said the Governor's Office would save a lot in monthly charges. He did not specify, though, how much is the projected savings, saying this would be determined after at least a month.

House OKs use of $1.3M tobacco funds

The House of Representatives has passed a bill appropriating $1.3 million of the Tobacco Control Funds for health-related programs. House Bill 14-8, authored by Rep. Benjamin B. Seman, aims to provide a total of $605,000 to the Department of Public Health for the following: design and construction, including furnishing, of the Kagman Wellness Center ($50,000); renovation and expansion of the San Roque Wellness Center ($45,000); and renovation of the San Antonio Wellness Center ($60,000). The bill also gives $156,000 to the Office of the Special Assistant for Youth Affairs for the House of Manhoben and youth learning centers on Saipan for the implementation of Youth Tobacco-Free programs.

Apr. 3, 2006

House turns attention to CPA-Mobil pipeline contract

The House of Representatives, after calling for a review and termination of lease agreements between the Commonwealth Ports Authority and two oil companies serving the Northern Marianas, has turned its attention to CPA and Mobil's pipeline agreement. On Friday, the lawmakers adopted House Resolution 15-44 requesting the Governor's Office and the Attorney General's Office to look into the pipeline system agreement between CPA and Mobil. The agreement, signed on May 29, 1996, allowed Mobil to lay and operate pipeline in a public land at the Saipan seaport area for a rental fee. The agreement commenced on June 1, 1996 and had a term of 30 years.

Admin still iffy about fuel surcharge

The administration remains noncommittal about when the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation's fuel surcharge will be scrapped. Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez said Friday that the removal of the fuel surcharge would depend on CUC's ability to collect utility revenues. "We're going to remove the fuel surcharge but it depends on CUC's reliability. [The fuel surcharge will remain] until CUC can procure [fuel] on its own," Villagomez said. However, he expressed hope that the added fee would be removed in six months. The administration had promised to scrap the fuel surcharge during the 2005 election campaign. It announced the six-month deadline for surcharge abolition after it assumed office in January.

SHRM partners with DYS for workforce readiness training

The CNMI Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management announces its partnership with the Division of Youth Services to carry on the Workforce Readiness Initiative project.

The CNMI SHRM was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the CNMI Division of Youth Services, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs in support of the 2013 Leadership and Economic Opportunity for Self-Sufficiency (LEOSS) Program. The continuation of the Workforce Readiness Initiative Program to benefit the Community will kick-off on April 15 with a one-week Food Service Workers/Wait Staff training program.

SHRM's role in administering part of DYS' Community Service Block grant through its Workforce Readiness Initiative will continue its program of assisting unemployed U.S. qualified workers through job preparation and skills training to be better qualified to enter the CNMI job market. SHRM will:

Provide a program of training that will prepare U.S. qualified workers (defined as U.S. citizens, FAS citizens, and green card holders) to join the CNMI workforce

Assist, as possible, in the placement of training graduates with companies that have agreed to accept Workforce Readiness Initiative graduates either in an on-the-job training or employment basis

In order to accomplish the intent of this grant, SHRM asks the continued help of the business community. The Workforce Readiness Initiative will consist of a series of one week preplacement training programs with a combination of general employee enhancement and job specific skills in employment areas where SHRM-member companies and other community businesses have indicated a need for replacement or additional staff.

The initiative will start off with Food Service Workers/ Wait Staff training, followed by warehousing workers (stockers, housekeepers, maintenance and other hands-on jobs), then hotel front desk clerk/administrative workers (receptionist, telephone operators, clerical, and other administrative positions), as the needs are identified. The Warehouseman program will include forklift certification training to enhance the graduates' value to prospective employers and the Food Service Workers/Wait Staff program will include the required CNMI Food Handlers training course. The Front Desk Clerk/Administrative worker program will be followed by an extended basic computer skills program.

SHRM asks that businesses notify the Workforce Readiness Initiative of types of staff that they might need, so that the Initiative can arrange future training programs to help fill these needs. SHRM also asks community businesses to work with the initiative to place the people trained by the various programs into their organizations. In turn, the SHRM Workforce Readiness Initiative and DYS will be working with the Workforce Investment Agency (WIA) and the CNMI Department of Labor to obtain suitable candidates that can receive WIA support to help with salary costs.

As mentioned above, the Workforce Readiness Initiative and the DYS LEOSS program are for the benefit of unemployed U.S. qualified workers. Sign-up for these initiative programs will be through DYS. Interested qualified individuals should contact Vivian Sablan, Social Worker IV with DYS, at 664-2559 or 664-2551. If not already registered, it would be to all job-seekers benefit to register with both WIA and the DOL Employment Services. You can also contact Frank Gibson, the Workforce Readiness Initiative manager by e-mail at hrsupportcnmi@gmail.com.

Although the initiative cannot guarantee a job for every participant, it will make every effort to get each graduate employed. More than 50 percent of the program graduates in the 2012 Workforce Readiness Initiative Program were placed. The initiative will continue to source jobs through its SHRM-member companies and other employers. Companies interested in considering Initiative graduates can also contact Gibson at hrsupportcnmi@gmail.com.

The 2013 DYS Workforce Readiness Initiative Program is managed for the CNMI Society for Human Resource Management by the CNMI human resource management and training consultancy firm, HR Support, CNMI. ***(SHRM)***

Community invited to NMCs Charter Day celebration

To celebrate more than 30 years of enriching lives through higher education, the Northern Marianas College is inviting the CNMI community to its biggest celebration of the year, Charter Day on May 3, 2013.

"We're inviting everyone to join us in As Terlaje for our Charter Day celebration," said Charter Day Committee chair Queanna Sablan. "We'll be showcasing various programs, celebrating employee and student achievement, and of course, featuring great entertainment."

The festivities will kick off at 3pm and will continue till 10pm. During the celebration, there will be the employee and student recognition awards.

The evening portion of the event will feature the various entertainment and competitions.

Delicious food, drinks and games will also be offered for sale by numerous vendors.

Agencies, businesses, clubs, and other civic organizations are invited to participate by purchasing booth space for the following categories: food/drink, specialty drinks (e.g. coffee coolers or pearl shakes), game booths, retail (arts and crafts, toys etc.), and information.

The deadline to submit applications for booth spaces is Tuesday, April 30, 2013 by 4pm. Booth space is limited so applications should be submitted as soon as possible.

The booth fee is $150 with $25 of the fee refunded to the vendors upon clean up of booth space post-event and passage of inspection from Charter Day officials. For NMC clubs and non-profit organizations, booth fees are $75 and also include a $25 refund up on booth space clean up and passage of inspection.

For more information, contact Queanna Sablan at 234-5498 ext. 1251/1253 or email queannas@nmcnet.edu. ***(PR)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated happy birthday to Matthew Manuel who celebrated his special day last March 30.

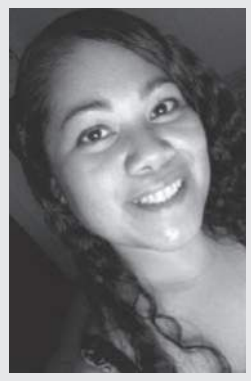
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated happy birthday to Ann Lagmay who celebrated her special day last March 29.

A special birthday shoutout go out to Eloise Castro who is celebrating her special day today. May you enjoy your day with lots of laughter and fun. Wishing you happiness and good health. God bless and we love you. Greetings coming out from your family and friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A big birthday shoutout going out to Lena K. Wabol! May your day be extra special and super awesome just like you! We love you so much and we wish you the best! God bless you all day, every day! With lots of love, your loving family, crazy yet caring friends, and most especially your B <3 xoxo.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

MARIANA PUBLIC LAND TRUST, Plaintiff, **vs.** **YVONNE A. ATALIG and GODEL OMENGEBAR,** Defendants.	]]]]]]]]]]	**Civil Action No. 10-0254**

NOTICE OF HEARING ON PLAINTIFF'S MOTION TO CONFIRM SALE OF MORTGAGED PROPERTY

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that the Motion to Confirm Sale of Mortgaged Property by Plaintiff Marianas Public Land Trust in this matter has been filed with the Court and said Motion is set for a hearing on this 17th day of April, 2013, at 9:00 a.m., before Judge Naraja in the Superior Court, Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 20th day of March, 2013.

/s /CLERK OF COURT

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

JOB VACANCY ANNOUCEMENT

It is the policy of the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) to limit hiring to qualified US workers, as restricted by CNMI law, and that equal opportunity be given to all qualified US worker applicants regardless of age, sex or sexual orientation, religion, marital status, political status, veterans status, disability or place of origin.

Opening Date: 04/01/13 Closing Date: 04/15/13*

JVA#13-001: Marketing Specialist III (Japan Market)
Pay Level / Step: 29/01 – 29/08
Annual Salary: $21,506.41 – 30,246.74**
Location: Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan

JVA#13-002: Statistics Specialist I
Pay Level / Step: 25/01 – 25/04
Annual Salary: $17,700.92 - $20,484.60**
Location: Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan

JVA#13-003: Marketing Specialist II (China Market)
Pay Level / Step: 27/01 – 27/07
Annual Salary: $19,511.46 - $26,131.39**
Location: Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan

*If not filled, the vacancy announcement will be continued and applications will be reviewed every two weeks thereafter until the search is closed. Deadlines that fall on a non-business day will be extended to the next business day.

** The salary given will be determined by the qualifications of the appointee.

Interested persons may contact the Marianas Visitors Authority Office at (670) 664-3200/01 for more detailed information on position description. A completed application must be submitted together with the required documents for consideration until search is closed. A resume may be attached, but the application form must be filled out in full. MVA is an equal opportunity employer.

United States
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COUNCIL on DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

FIVE YEAR STATE PLAN
FY 2012-2016
Goals Areas & Goals

GOALS AREA: EMPLOYMENT
GOAL: People with Developmental Disabilities have improved access to employment and entrepreneurial opportunities consistent with their interest, abilities and needs.

GOAL AREA: TRANSPORTATION
GOAL: People with developmental disabilities have access to transportation services for work, school, medical, emergency, and perform other basic needs.

GOAL AREA: EMERGENCY & DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
GOAL: Increase access to Emergency and Disaster Preparedness information and education that will be provided to people with developmental disabilities and their families so they are informed in the event of a disaster.

GOAL AREA: SELF-ADVOCACY
GOAL: Individuals with developmental disabilities will engage in activities that will help educate private and public establishments on how to improve the accessibility of their entities.
GOAL: People with developmental disabilities will vocalize their opinions on issues that affect their lives in the community.

GOAL AREA: LEADERSHIP
GOAL: Actively engage people with developmental disabilities in leadership and systems advocacy opportunities.

GOAL AREA: RESPITE CARE
GOAL: Families members and/or Caregivers of individuals with DD will have access to Respite services made Available through the Commonwealth Respite Services Program (CNMI PL-1436).

CNMI DD COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 502565 SAIPAN, MP 96950
info@cnmidd.org
Tel: (670) 664-7000 • Fax: (670) 664–7030

The CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities is required to review the Five Year State Plan annually and submit amendments as needed.

Therefore, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities will be conducting public hearings on the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota on how best the Council can and should serve all individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. During the public hearings, all persons with developmental disabilities, their families, friends, the general public will be provided the opportunity to review and offer comment or input on the State Plan Amendments of its FIVE YEAR STATE PLAN.

All and any comments, recommendations or inputs given during these hearings will be incorporated in the State Plan Amendments.

Schedule of Public Hearings

SAIPAN	TINIAN	ROTA
WHEN: To Be Announced **WHERE:** Multi-Purpose Center **TIME:** 6:30pm to 7:30pm	**WHEN:** April 8, 2013 **WHERE:** Fleming's Restaurant **TIME:** 4:00pm to 5:00pm	**WHEN:** April 04, 2013 **WHERE:** NMC Rota Campus **TIME:** 3:00pm to 4:00pm

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: If you require reasonable accommodation (e.g., large print, sign language interpreter) to participate in the Public Hearing, please contact the CNMI DD COUNCIL Office at least 3 working days in advance of the meeting to make necessary arrangements. Alternative formats of the proposed 5 Year State Plan is available upon request.

Pamela C. Sablan, Executive Director of CNMI DD COUNCIL
This ad was paid for by funds from the DD Basic Grant Part B.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXIII, Issue No. 66

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Attend to your parents—or else

If you're a grown-up with parents, you may think it's a major pain to have to take time out of your busy life to go see them or have them over. You may get tired of their hints that they don't get enough attention. You may even have to listen to resentful complaints or demands. Plus those questions about why you let your kids get away with (fill-in-the-blank) ...

Think you've got it tough? Some of your contemporaries in China gladly would trade places with you.

That's because in the world's most populous nation, attending to your filial obligations is no longer entirely up to your discretion. It's a legal obligation. The government has enacted a law mandating that children visit their parents and that employers give the children time off to do so. And if Junior shirks his duty, Mom and Dad can sue him to force compliance.

Chinese culture has long placed a heavy emphasis on respect and care for parents. "While father and mother are alive," said Confucius, "a good son does not wander far afield." But in China's fast-paced modern economy, many sons and daughters take jobs far from where they were raised, and see their parents only rarely.

That doesn't sit well with the elders. "I know the person who drafted this provision, and the first thing I told him was, 'Really nice move,'" Ninie Wang of the Gerontological Society of China told The New York Times.

Americans who have not reached middle age may consider such remedies laughable. What they may not have considered is that the ranks of seniors are being rapidly augmented by the baby boomers, who have long enjoyed the power that goes with outnumbering every other generation. Boomers are used to getting their way, and they are not about to give that up just because they've got gray hair and creaking joints.

No sirree. Boomers pushed Frank Sinatra and Perry Como aside for the Beatles and Stones. They got the draft abolished. They got the voting age changed from 21 to 18. They got the drinking age lowered for them _ and then raised for their kids.

They think the world revolves around them because for two-thirds of a century, it has. In retirement, they will have not only outsized numbers but even more time to spend arranging the world to their satisfaction.

The generations that follow them have long worried about paying to keep Social Security and Medicare benefits at the level these fledgling seniors have been led to expect. But boomers will not be bought off with mere money. They will expect time with the kids _ and the grandkids. They will expect company for Sunday dinners and summer trips. Birthdays and holidays _ you can guess.

What if they don't get what they want? Well, the Chinese have devised one option. And if we know anything about our representatives in Washington, it's that they have no desire to take on a bunch of cranky old folks with a habit of showing up on Election Day.

A couple of decades back, seniors who were protective of their retirement benefits earned the nickname "greedy geezers." Greedy? Kids, you ain't seen nothing yet.

(c)2013 Chicago Tribune

Are you ready to take on those Taliban fanatics?
Yes... but are YOU?...
U.S. OF
N. DAKOTA ABORTION BAN AFTER 6 WEEKS
MARGULIES
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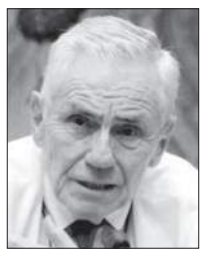
Reaching out to North Korea

By DONALD GREGG
Los Angeles Times



Donald Gregg, the U.S. ambassador to South Korea from 1989 to 1993, was CIA station chief in that country from 1973 to 1975. He served as national security adviser to Vice President George H.W. Bush from 1982 to 1988. He wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.

President Obama's recent Middle East trip showed what good things can result from thoughtful, direct presidential involvement. The president addressed young Israelis, reassured allies in the region and brokered an Israeli apology to Turkey for a deadly raid on a flotilla attempting to take supplies to Gaza.

The president should employ that same sort of diplomacy toward North Korea.

An increasingly dangerous confrontation is building between the United States and North Korea. The outrageous rhetoric pouring out of Pyongyang makes it difficult to do anything more than dismiss North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Un. But abandoning diplomacy would be extremely dangerous. The North Koreans are convinced that nuclear weapons are the only thing keeping them safe from a U.S. attack, and recent flights of nuclear-capable U.S. warplanes over the Korean peninsula only hardened that conviction.

As distasteful as it may seem, we need to talk directly with the North Koreans. They will not give up their nuclear weapons at this juncture, and for the United States to demand that they do so as a precondition for talks will only lead to greater tension, including the possibility of a military explosion. Would it not be better to negotiate a peace treaty?

The George W. Bush administration took the position that engagement with Pyongyang would reward bad behavior, and that seems to be the approach of the Obama administration too. But though the North Koreans often sound like belligerent lunatics, there are certainly many reasons to engage, particularly on a peace treaty, an idea Kim Jong Un might well embrace.

I have been dealing with Korean issues for 40 years, since I arrived as the CIA's chief of station in Seoul. Later, from 1989 to 1993, I served as ambassador to South Korea. And time and again I saw diplomacy work where confrontation would have failed.

In August 1973, U.S. Ambassador Philip Habib learned that opposition leader Kim Dae-jung had been kidnapped in Tokyo and was on a small boat about to be thrown into the sea. It was widely assumed (and later confirmed) that South Korea's intelligence service, the KCIA, was responsible. But Habib did not jump into his sedan and confront autocratic President Park Chung-hee with an accusation. Habib first wrote Park a letter, giving him time to construct a response that kept Kim alive and enabled Park to deflect responsibility for the kidnapping.

In December 1980, I witnessed close up a confrontation that failed. Kim Dae-jung had, at that point, been sentenced to death on trumped-up charges of treason. Outgoing President Jimmy Carter sent Defense Secretary Harold Brown and me to Seoul to confront South Korea's president, Chun Doo-hwan, on the matter. Our instructions were to tell him, essentially, to release Kim "or else."

This approach failed utterly, and Kim was on the verge of execution. The incoming Reagan administration, led by Richard V. Allen, was astute enough to offer Chun a visit to the White House to keep Kim alive. In order to see Reagan, Chun released Kim, who went on to become South Korea's president and receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Granted, these experiences were in South Korea, a place very different from its northern neighbor. But diplomacy works around the world. We can't simply order Kim Jong Un to abandon his nuclear ambitions. Dialogue is needed, and Obama should reach out to those who have negotiated successfully with North Korea to help craft an approach.

Next month, South Korean President Park Geun-hye will visit Washington to meet with Obama. I was in Seoul in 1974 when a North Korean agent trying to kill her father, President Park Chung-hee, fired and missed, killing her mother instead. Still, Park Geun-hye visited Pyongyang in 2001 and met with then-President Kim Jong Il. When I congratulated her for doing so, her response was: "We must look to the future with hope, not to the past with bitterness."

Park calls her policy toward North Korea "trustpolitik," and she would undoubtedly be pleased to find thinking compatible with that policy in the White House, as would China's new president, Xi Jinping, who has already called Park, offering to help ease tension between the two Koreas.

The alternative to diplomacy is escalating conflict, and that would be a terrible mistake on the Korean peninsula. Negotiating a lasting peace is the only sensible approach.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Remembering…

By JOHN DELROSARIO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*

When you hang your working cap and head into retirement, your contribution to society would determine how people remember or forget your name. If your performance is sterling in terms of leading the NMI get somewhere, your name is likely to be around for about 500 years.

If it's riddled with mediocrity, your name would quickly drift off or slide into the quick sands of history. Would people remember you? What's your lasting contribution other than being inducted into the strange courtyard across the Post Office?

I have found a few who fit the true definition of "leadership" covering the pioneering days of self-government after the war and contemporary ones of recent past. Most folks that have donned the halo of "elected" have emerged out of circumstance. You critically look into their history in hopes of finding some appreciable contributions. None!

Being a polished demagogue isn't leadership. It's politics! Donning trappings of a seasoned bureaucrat or politician isn't leadership either but polished facade. You quiz if leadership hasn't been redefined to mean mediocrity.

Appalling though how we've elected people who don't have the requisite credentials to deal with policy matters capable of seeing the forest over the trees. Wearing Sears Roebuck or JC Penny ties is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a substitute for credentials and vision. But we've seen some improvements though painful lessons they were as we inch our way forward.

Lasting contributions

My list of revered and accomplished leaders is woefully short. I've researched the elected and appointed that include the humblest servant to the most powerful and proactive intellectuals and visionaries of past and present. It's an interesting list. Let's compare notes for discussion purposes.

There were pioneering and contemporary indigenous leaders who were appointed or elected to oversee the initial establishment of an incipient system of self-government in the islands after the war. In island communities, these highly revered folks are known as the "wise men" of the village. Counsel is sought from them especially on controversial matters as former stewards and voice of reason of their people.

There were the late mayors Ignacio M. Benavente and Elias P. Sablan who both served as judges and spiritual folks too. Essentially, they led the islands out of the rut of the destruction of World War II into the brighter tomorrows of effective self-rule.

Among the more prominent contemporaries are former speaker Oscar C. Rasa and former NMI Supreme Court justice Jose S. Dela Cruz. Both are highly credentialed and experienced leaders who are also spiritual in their own ways. Others include: David M. Sablan, a business leader with superb business acumen, former Marianas District Legislature president Vicente N. Santos, and former NMI Supreme Court justice Jesse Borja.

Though they have moved out of active public life, none has been a shrinking violet nor has their intellectual acuity atrophied with time. They individually continue to use their time and energy contributing to healthy discussions on substantive issues. I relish in-depth, intellectual and productive discussions with these folks whose continuing contributions we should employ to guide us as we face 21st century challenges.

As it is, there's a vacuum in the entire archipelago where our people yearn for leadership, a sense of purpose and direction and the thirst to see educated discussions take us to the next level beyond mediocrity. As such, our people are groping for answers outside themselves. The vacuum leads to landing with consistent fatal disappointment in superficial land pining in earnest for realistic answers. There's hopelessness everywhere. Is there hope for brighter tomorrow?

We would discuss the often-ignored concept of wealth and jobs creation equally probing collateral issues, first principles and the long developmental journey of a democratic republic, health, and economic prosperity, among others. Our efforts would transcend politics so we get to real substantive issues in sober fashion. It's a Herculean task but one that begins with the first step in a thousand mile journey.

The importance of this group becomes even more vital as the NMI faces wildly shifting paradigms from the global community that shift by the seconds. These external influences leave us pining for answers often derailed by our own lack of definition of our aspirations. It creates disconnection between the elected and the multitude. Whatever our aspirations may be, it begins with the self. We must harness their wisdom as they navigate their golden years.

The rough road ahead

While the tropical air is cleaner upstairs, we still breath particles of the pungent stench left behind by "I Am the Rule." It'll take sometime before the filth is blown across the Philippine Seas.

Meanwhile, there's the lull created by the puncturing of the balloon of impeachment that subsided when the former governor resigned in disgrace. What now?

This is the juncture where the issue of leadership comes into play. Would the new administration ably meet the expectations of the multitude? Coast along hoping for some divine intervention, step-up to the plate and deliver what the previous titular ignored with grand negligence? Would something substantive emerge or will it be more of the same? I've placed it on my radar screen for monitoring.

Be that as it may, we can't employ the "instant soba" mindset in the resolution of the most substantive issues. It takes resolute planning to map-out the destiny of these isles. But expect cheap shots from those who look forward to seeing miracles descending from the side of the hill.

The real winners in the war

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer*. Readers may write to her at:* Philadelphia Inquirer, *P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by e-mail at trubin@phillynews.com.*

Two weeks ago, on the 10th anniversary of the Iraq war, I wrote a column that laid out the losers in the conflict. I argued there were still no clear winners.

One reader responded that there are obvious winners: the private civilian contractors who provided security and supplies for the war effort, and were paid tens of billions of dollars by the U.S. government. A hefty chunk of those billions was wasted due to overbilling, shoddy work and fraud.

The reader was correct (although I disagree with his assertion that we began the war in order to fuel the military-industrial complex). He fingered an important problem we still haven't come to grips with: Our military and civilian agencies seem unable to conduct massive nation-building efforts in war zones effectively, or to supervise the private contractors to whom we often outsource this job.

In 2011, a bipartisan congressional commission estimated that between $31 billion and $60 billion of the $206 billion paid to contractors since the start of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars had been wasted. The heart of the problem, said the Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan, is excessive reliance on badly supervised private contractors engaging in "vast amounts of spending for no benefit."

Anyone who has spent time in Iraq could testify to the truth of those words.

One man with particular knowledge of the problem is Stuart Bowen, the special inspector general for Iraq reconstruction, whose agency (referred to as SIGIR) has documented the failings of Iraq reconstruction and some of its most egregious contractor fraud. Speaking last week at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, Bowen warned: "We have yet to learn our lessons" from Iraq (or Afghanistan) when it comes to nation-building under fire.

I'll get back to Bowen's lessons, but first a word about our runaway spending on war contractors. In Iraq, our reliance on contractors—who provided many of the services that used to be carried out by grunts in the regular Army—permitted the military to hold down the number of troops sent to the country. It also permitted the government to go to war without reinstituting the draft.

In 2008, at the height of the war, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that one of every five dollars spent on the Iraq war had gone to contractors; at that point, the contracts were worth about $85 billion. That year, contractors employed about 180,000 people in Iraq—often from third-world countries—who worked as bodyguards, translators, construction workers, launderers, cooks and drivers. They amounted to a second private army that was larger than the U.S. military force in Iraq.

This was a setup designed (intentionally or not) for favoritism and fraud.

Perhaps the biggest beneficiary of the contract largesse, as you may recall, was Kellogg Brown & Root, or KBR, then a subsidiary of Halliburton Co.—whose CEO from 1995 to 2000 was Dick Cheney. KBR received huge, no-bid government contracts and reaped tens of billions of dollars for its Iraq work. A highly placed Pentagon procurement officer who tried to blow the whistle on some KBR contracts was drummed out of her job in 2005. In 2009, Halliburton agreed to pay $559 million to the U.S. government to settle corruption charges linked to KBR.

SIGIR has documented scores of egregious scams, including one that featured a Kuwait-based U.S. contractor who reaped millions by bribing corrupt American military officers to give him contracts. The agency estimates that at least $8 billion of $60 billion spent on Iraq reconstruction was "wasted." I'd guess the number is probably much higher.

The most frustrating aspect of the contracting problem is that it was so obvious from the start of the Iraq war. With so much U.S. money flowing into Iraq—often in bricks of cash—almost any scamster could qualify as a contractor and reap millions, such as the two adventurers who won a $16 million contract to guard the Baghdad airport even though they had no experience. Iraqi friends of mine in Baghdad constantly told me stories of rip-offs by Iraqi and American wheeler-dealers, and then asked in amazement why the Americans let them continue.

The answer, as Bowen makes clear, was (and is) systemic. It involved not only the United States' need to rely on contractors, but also its officials' inability to track the money allotted, as well as their unwillingness to consult with locals on what projects were really needed and workable.

With different agencies and often different allied countries providing funds, auditing systems were disjointed. Auditors were often unable to penetrate foreign cultures or ensure that projects were actually completed in conflict areas they couldn't visit.

Bowen gives a perfect example: a $300 million water-treatment plant built in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah. The plant is only 20 percent operational. The grandiose plan didn't take into consideration that the system was too powerful for the available water pipes, or that the local tribe, whose members got control of the project, didn't have the skills to operate it.

When money is thrown at nation-building projects without sufficient security or civilian-military coordination, and when it exceeds what local systems can absorb or manage, the only real beneficiaries are the contractors. U.S. taxpayers lose, Iraqis don't gain, and the end result fuels Iraqi and American suspicions about the real motives behind the efforts.

SIGIR is about to shut down; its final report is titled "Lessons From Iraq." It's unclear whether the U.S. government has absorbed them.

And if you think this problem no longer exists now that we've left Iraq, think again. The same problems still bedevil projects in Afghanistan. Future nation-building efforts beckon as we confront failed states in Syria, Libya, and Yemen, or stay on in Kabul after 2014. There, too, contractors may have the most to gain.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Saipanda

Dear Governor Inos and elected officials:

Mr. Michael Merner, marketing expert for Japan, recently stated that Japanese traveling to the Commonwealth remain fascinated with Saipanda. Mr. Merger fails to realize the sentiment of the people of the Commonwealth; our tradition, our culture, and our way of life. Saipanda is a misrepresentation to all of those that spell out the Chamorro and Carolinian aspects. Therefore, as a mascot, Saipanda is highly improper.

Saipanda is the only thing that MVA has to offer to the Japanese travelers. So they don't really have a choice! And, Saipanda is a prejudice to the other islands like Tinian, Rota, and the Northern Islands of the Commonwealth. Saipanda is only representing the island of Saipan. What about the other islands?

MVA should consider changing its mascot that will represent the entire CNMI. Give our visitors a better choice. A stuffed dolly like a sea turtle will do the job as effectively as a Panda but, with a taste of the islands of the Commonwealth. And the new mascot should be made available to all retailers to promote.

Alexandro "Colonel" Sablan
Dandan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Mostly clear with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly clear with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼76°	▲89° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°

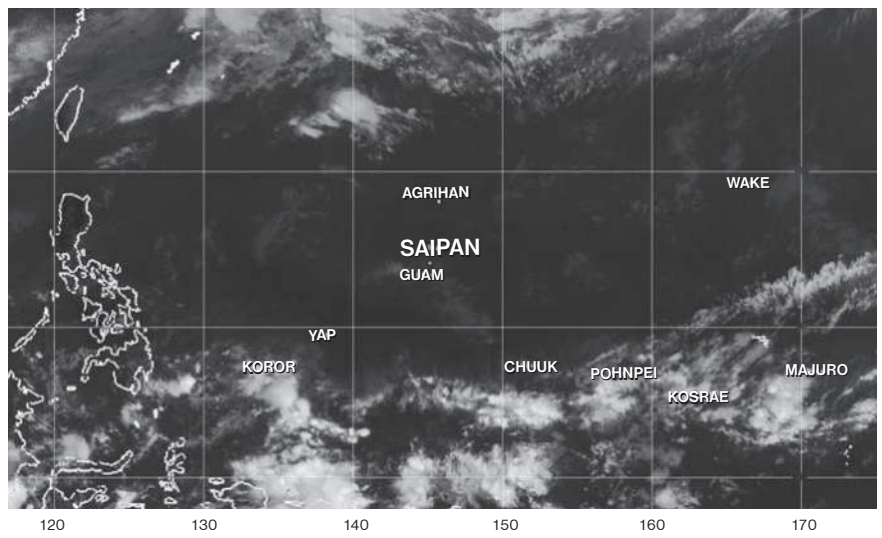
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲87	▼79
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲89	▼78
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲84	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼80
Kosrae	Showers	▲86	▼80
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲69	▼59
Beijing	Cloudy	▲59	▼46
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲76	▼74
Honolulu	Sunny	▲78	▼67
London	Cloudy	▲40	▼36
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲76	▼56
Manila	Mostly Sunny	▲94	▼80
Melbourne	Sunny	▲69	▼50
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲81	▼71
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲45	▼32
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲65	▼49
Paris	Cloudy	▲45	▼35
Pusan	Windy	▲65	▼51
Rome	Cloudy	▲61	▼53
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲70	▼51
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	▲67	▼56
Seoul	Sunny	▲67	▼41
Tokyo	Sunny	▲67	▼56
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲52	▼36

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2013
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Low-level convergence south of a warm front located north of Iwo To island is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms southwest of Iwo To island between 22N and 25N from 136E to 141E. A trade-wind disturbance is producing a narrow band of scattered showers across Guam and Rota within 100 miles of a line from 13N142E to 13N146E to 9N149E. A surface trough west of Koror extends northeastward from 2N130E to 8N132E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found across and south of the Republic of Palau within 200 miles of a line from 8N135E to EQ137E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across eastern Micronesia from just south of Chuuk to the date line or between 3N and 7N from 148E to 180. This includes Pohnpei, Kosrae and Majuro. Similar conditions are found well south of Chuuk near the equator south of a line from 2N143E to 2N154E. A trade-wind disturbance is producing scattered showers southeast of Wake Island within 120 miles of a line from 19N169E to 13N177E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:58 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
8:18 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
1:19 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
8:50 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:11 AM	6:30 PM
Thursday	6:11 AM	6:30 PM
Friday	6:10 AM	6:30 PM
Saturday	6:09 AM	6:30 PM
Sunday	6:08 AM	6:30 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:17 AM	12:00 PM
Thursday	1:12 AM	12:59 PM
Friday	2:02 AM	1:57 PM
Saturday	2:50 AM	2:53 PM
Sunday	3:34 AM	3:47 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 8, 2013

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 4, 6, 7
UA5062	4:40am	5:30am	1, 3, 5
UA5068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
UA5074	11:10am	12:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5076	3:10pm	4:00pm	Daily
UA5078	6:55pm	7:45pm	Daily
UA5072	9:45pm	10:35pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:00am	8:45am	Daily
DL285	6:30am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7
DL297	4:25pm	7:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

0Z119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

0Z608	3:10am	6:20am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

0Z606	2:10am	6:00am	1
0Z606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
0Z6063	3:30am	7:20am	1, 5
0Z119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX
0Z604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:00am	8:35am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU7108	3:50am	7:40am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)

XF1734	11:55am	5:10pm	5

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

0Z606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
0Z606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/191	4:35am	9:55am	6 via GUM
UA5062/191	4:40am	9:55am	3 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:15pm	2, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
DL287/173	6:00am	10:35pm	1, 3, 6 via NRT
UA5076/183	3:10pm	8:45pm	Daily via GUM
0Z604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
UA5072/PR111	9:45pm	7:45am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

0Z606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
0Z606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5076/147	3:10pm	9:45pm	1, 5 via GUM
0Z604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA 5069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 4, 6, 7
UA5071	7:05am	7:55am	Daily
UA5073	9:50am	10:40am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
UA5075	1:45pm	2:35pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5077	5:35pm	6:25pm	Daily
UA5079	8:20pm	9:10pm	Daily

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5062	3:35am	4:10am	1, 3, 5
UA5038	10:55am	11:30am	6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL286	7:40pm	12:15am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

0Z120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

0Z607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

0Z603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
0Z120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
0Z605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
0Z605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
0Z6053	8:50pm	2:10am+1	4, 7

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU7107	7:40pm	2:50am+1	4, 7

GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)-SAIPAN

XF1733	8:00pm	12:05am+1	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

0Z704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
DL172/288	7:55am	1:15am+1	2, 4, 7 via NRT
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via NRT
UA190/5077	10:55am	6:25pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/5079	10:55am	9:10pm	3, 6 via GUM
0Z702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
0Z702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA5072	10:15pm	7:55am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:55am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5071	11:59pm	7:55am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

0Z746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
0Z722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
0Z722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:35pm	7:55am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

Business

India's rejection of drug patent could reverberate

By LINDA A. JOHNSON
AP BUSINESS WRITER

The India Supreme Court's rejection of a patent for an improved version of a costly cancer drug by Novartis AG could have big implications for the world's largest drugmakers.

The ruling, which was handed down on Monday, signals the latest shift in the world of drug development in emerging markets such as India and Brazil, where drugmakers have been looking for growth.

Western governments routinely grant patents for slightly improved versions of medicines whose patents are about to expire. That enables drugmakers to get many patients to upgrade to their new, generally more expensive versions rather than the cheaper, generic knockoffs even though some doctors and patients argue that the improvements don't justify the high cost. But India, Indonesia and some other developing countries have been bucking that trend. They've been shooting down Western patents and licensing local pharmaceutical companies to make cheap generic versions of medicines that most of their residents otherwise could not afford.

Major drugmakers such as Pfizer and Bayer AG on Monday declined to say what they might do regarding the ruling and other recent decisions by poor countries to let local drugmakers sell cheap generic versions for medicines that have monopolies under patents in Western countries. But some industry insiders—including a Novartis executive—predict that multinational drugmakers will decide against doing drug research and development in India.

"Novartis will not invest in drug research in India. Not only Novartis, I don't think any global company is planning to research in India," Ranjit Shahani, the vice chairman and managing director of Novartis India, said after the ruling.

Erik Gordon, a professor and analyst at University of Michigan's Ross School of Business, agrees. He said the ruling means that there's "no reason to do research and development in India" because of its "national policy of hostility toward medicine patents."

One thing is clear, though: Emerging markets are not the gold mine that optimistic pharmaceutical executives have been making them out to be.

India's move casts significant doubt on the companies' predictions that within a few years, emerging markets will generate one-quarter or even one-third of their global revenue. They've been counting on governments and a rising middle class in emerging markets to spend more on their brand-name medicines rather than the locally made drugs that may be counterfeit.

"Less patent protection in huge, developing markets means less revenue, and growth stories that are going to look like fantasies," Gordon said.

That's a big problem for drugmakers that already squeezed on all sides.

Government and private health plans in industrialized countries, particularly in deficit-laden Europe, have been pushing for lower drug prices and occasionally even refusing to cover very-expensive drugs. Consumer health spending has been constrained by severe recessions across the globe. Research is ever more expensive. And virtually every drugmaker has been hurt in the last few years by expirations of patents for popular drugs that once made billions every year.

Countries such as Indonesia and Brazil for several years have been licensing local pharmaceutical companies to make cheap generic versions of medicines, usually drugs for HIV, the deadly virus that causes AIDS.

But recently, India has overturned patents for several cancer drugs, including Bayer AG's Nexavar, AstraZeneca PLC's Iressa, Pfizer Inc.'s Sutent and Bristol-Myers Squibb Co's Sprycel, according to Mark Grayson, spokesman for the big drugmakers' trade group, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.

AP

A cameraman films the head office of Novartis India Limited in Mumbai, India, Monday, April 1, 2013.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Boeing conducts another test flight of 787 jet

SEATTLE (AP)—Boeing Co. conducted another test flight of its 787 passenger jet over the West Coast. The company said Monday's flight was designed to test system upgrades and not to check operation of the plane's batteries. Airlines have 50 of the planes, which Boeing calls the Dreamliner. But they're still grounded after two of them overheated in January. Boeing is trying to assure regulators that after some design changes, the batteries are safe. Boeing expects to make at least one battery-test flight.

Obama nominates economic aide to 2nd budget slot

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama has nominated one of his senior economic advisers as deputy director of the White House budget office. Obama has chosen Brian Deese as his nominee for the number two slot at the Office of Management and Budget, a key position as Obama and Congress confront ongoing fiscal challenges. Deese has been deputy director of Obama's National Economic Council and was a main administration figure during auto bailout negotiations in 2009.

Pizza Hut rolls out pie with 'cheese pockets'

NEW YORK (AP)—Pizza Hut has found a way to get more cheese into American diets—a pizza crust made of little cheese-stuffed bread bowls. The chain on Wednesday will introduce a new pizza that comes surrounded by 16 semi-circles of cheese that can be pulled off and eaten separately. The "Crazy Cheesy Crust," which will be available for several weeks, isn't the first time Pizza Hut has incorporated cheese into its crusts. In 1995, the chain introduced its Stuffed Crust Pizza as a limited-time offer but the pies were such a hit that they soon became a permanent part of the menu.

Apple apologizes in China after service criticism

BEIJING (AP)—Apple apologized to Chinese consumers after government media attacked its repair policies for two weeks in a campaign that reeked of economic nationalism.

A statement Apple posted in Chinese on its website Monday said the complaints had prompted "deep reflection" and persuaded the company of the need to revamp its repair policies, boost communication with Chinese consumers and strengthen oversight of authorized resellers.

State broadcaster CCTV and the ruling Communist Party's flagship newspaper, People's Daily, had led the charge against the American company. They accused Apple Inc. of arrogance, greed and "throwing its weight around" and portrayed it as just the latest Western company to exploit the Chinese consumer.

The attacks quickly backfired, though, and were mocked by the increasingly sophisticated Chinese consumers who revere Apple and its products. State-run media also inadvertently revived complaints over shoddy service by Chinese companies.

Nonetheless, Apple responded with an apology from CEO Tim Cook.

"We've come to understand through this process that because of our poor communication, some have come to feel that Apple's attitude is arrogant and that we don't care about or value feedback from the consumer," Cook's Chinese statement said, as translated by The Associated Press. "For the concerns and misunderstandings passed on to the consumer, we express our sincere apologies."

Although Apple enjoys strong support from Chinese consumers, the vehemence of the attacks and the importance of the Chinese market appeared to have persuaded the company to appear contrite.

The People's Daily newspaper ran an editorial last Wednesday headlined "Strike down Apple's incomparable arrogance."

"Here we have the Western person's sense of superiority making mischief," the newspaper wrote. "If there's no risk in offending the Chinese consumer, and it also makes for lower overheads, then why not?"

Camry battles spruced-up rivals in midsize market

DETROIT (AP)—For nearly two decades, the Toyota Camry and the Honda Accord have ruled the mid-sized car market.

Nobody accused them of being stylish or fast. But the cars rarely broke down, and they held their value better than competitors. For drivers who wanted a family car, Camry and Accord got the job done and were good enough to become two of the best-selling cars of all time.

But now the dominance is starting to slip. Cars like the Hyundai Sonata, Ford Fusion, Nissan Altima and Kia Optima have cut into sales of the Camry and Accord by offering combinations of sleeker designs, luxury-car features and better gas mileage.

The competition has shaken up the biggest segment of the U.S. auto market. The completely redesigned vehicles have made midsize cars appealing to a broader audience, from young families to downsizing baby boomers to people who want the look and feel of luxury but don't want the cost. Midsize cars accounted for almost 25 percent of the total industry in February, up from 22 percent at the end of 2007. Automakers report March sales on Tuesday.

Differences in quality and reliability in midsize cars have all but been erased, so buyers now look at styling and performance, industry analysts say. That puts added pressure on Toyota and Honda to stay ahead, but also on the other automakers, because brand loyalty isn't what it used to be. Every time a new, sleeker car comes out, many buyers flock to it. As a result, automakers are redesigning midsize cars in about half the usual time.

"Your latest and greatest are the ones that are selling the most," said Glenn Mears, owner of Chrysler, Ford, Honda and Nissan dealerships in the Dover, Ohio, area south of Cleveland.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
14,572.85	1,562.17	3,239.17
-5.69	-7.02	-28.35
-0.04%	-0.45%	-0.87%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	0.9564	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7641	Philippine Peso	40.8341
British Pound	0.6564	Indian Rupee	54.3404	Singapore Dollar	1.238
Canadian Dollar	1.0154	Indonesian Rupiah	9721.9	South Korean Won	1117.4
Chinese Yuan	6.2061	Japanese Yen	92.7693	Swiss Franc	0.9459
Euro	0.7776	New Zealand Dollar	1.1906	Taiwan Dollar	29.837
				Thailand Baht	29.3179

Nation

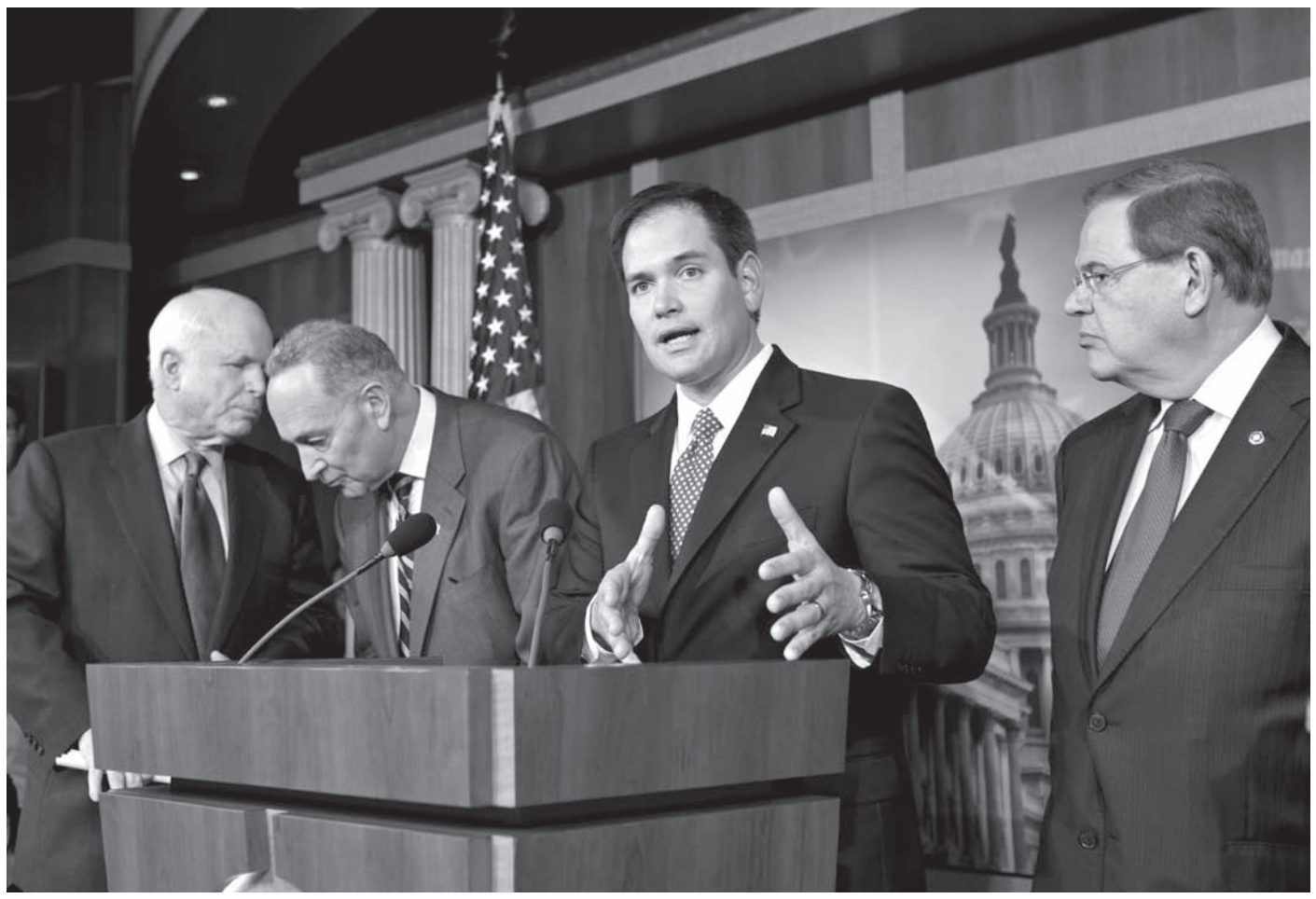
Rubio claims pivot point on immigration overhaul

WASHINGTON (AP)—Whatever immigration deal might be claimed by labor and business, or by Democrats and Republicans, Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida is serving notice it has to go through him.

The tea party favorite made it clear over the weekend he has a make-or-break role for the most sweeping immigration changes in decades. It's a high-risk strategy that also puts his presidential ambitions on the line.

Four Republican senators are involved with Democrats in crafting a bipartisan bill to secure the nation's borders, improve legal immigration and offer eventual citizenship to millions now in the U.S. illegally. But only Rubio has the conservative bona fides plus life-story credibility to help steer the bill through the Senate with strong support from the GOP, and give it a chance in the House, where conservative Republicans hold more sway.

More than anyone else, Rubio, the son of Cuban immigrants, could have the clout to hold off rebellion from conservative talk show hosts and a Republican base whose opposition helped kill immigration changes last time around, in 2007. And perhaps only Rubio could sink the entire effort just by walking away.



AP

In this Jan. 28, 2013, file photo Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., center,speaks at a Capitol Hill news conference with a bipartisan group of leading senators to announce their agreement on the principles of sweeping legislation to rewrite the nation's immigration laws.

If the first-term senator decides against the bill, "that just takes all the oxygen out of the room," said Al Cardenas, chairman of the American Conservative Union. "It may pass the Senate with Democrats' support ... but that's not the kind of support you want out of the Senate if you expect passage out of the House."

With that unique status, Rubio is walking a fine line. He's helping negotiate the politically combustible legislation, which the bipartisan group is expected to unveil next week, while also taking care to maintain the conservative support that makes him so important to the process in the first place.

For Rubio, more so than the other Republicans involved—Sens. John McCain and Jeff Flake of Arizona and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina—there's danger in a full-throated embrace of comprehensive immigration legislation. For some conservatives, it will always be toxic: It's a priority for Democrats and President Barack Obama that some foes see as granting amnesty to millions of law-breakers.

But Rubio also could see the biggest political payoff. Helping shepherd a comprehensive immigration bill to passage could win support from Hispanic voters that could be critical if he runs for president in 2016. GOP nominee Mitt Romney's dismal showing among Hispanic and Asian voters last November helped seal his loss, and McCain and many other Republicans warn that the GOP risks permanent minority status if it doesn't resolve the immigration issue.

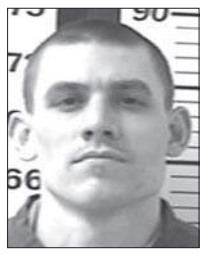
"If he's the guy who helps navigate a reform package over the finish line in a way that brings conservatives along and makes Latinos happy, then his viability as a GOP candidate in 2016 goes way up," said Frank Sharry, executive director of America's Voice, a group that advocates a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants.

All of this helps explain Rubio's caution as the debate moves forward, an approach that was on display this past weekend.

As Graham and Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., were appearing on Sunday talk shows to all but declare an immigration deal completed—after a hard-won agreement between business and labor on a new low-skilled worker program—Rubio was putting out a different message: Not so fast.

Suspect in Colo. prison chief death got out early

DENVER (AP)—If it weren't for a paperwork error, Evan Spencer Ebel would have still been in prison instead of being suspected of killing Colorado's prisons chief.



Ebel

Judicial officials on Monday acknowledged that Ebel's previous felony conviction had been inaccurately recorded, leading to his release from prison nearly four years earlier than authorities intended.

In 2008, Ebel pleaded guilty in rural Fremont County to assaulting a prison officer. In the plea deal, Ebel was to be sentenced to up to four additional years in prison, to be served after he completed the eight-year sentence that put him behind bars in 2005, according to a statement from Colorado's 11th Judicial District.

However, the judge did not say the sentence was meant to be "consecutive," or in addition to, Ebel's current one. So the court clerk recorded it as one to be served "concurrently," or at the same time. That's the information that went to the state prisons, the statement said.

So on Jan. 28, prisons officials saw that Ebel had finished his court-ordered sentence and released him. They said they had no way of knowing the plea deal was intended to keep Ebel behind bars for years longer.

Two months later, Ebel was dead after a shootout with authorities in Texas. The gun he used in the March 21 gunbattle was the same one used to shoot and kill prisons chief Tom Clements two days earlier. Police believe Ebel also was involved in the death of a Domino's Pizza delivery man, Nathan Leon, in Denver.

Suspicion in DA death shifts to white supremacists

KAUFMAN, Texas (AP)—Suspicion in the slayings of a Texas district attorney and his wife shifted Monday to a violent white supremacist prison gang that was the focus of a December law enforcement bulletin warning that its members might try to attack police or prosecutors.

The weekend deaths of Kaufman County District Attorney Mike McLelland and his wife, who were found fatally shot in their home, were especially jarring because they happened just a couple of months after one of the county's assistant district attorneys, Mark Hasse, was killed near his courthouse office.

And less than two weeks ago, Colorado's prison chief was shot to death at his front door, apparently by a white supremacist ex-convict who died in a shootout with deputies after fleeing to Texas.

The Aryan Brotherhood of Texas has been in the state's prison system since the 1980s, when it began as a white supremacist gang that protected its members and ran illegal activities, including drug distribution, according to Terry Pelz, a former Texas prison warden and expert on the gang.

The group, which has a long history of violence and retribution, is now believed to have more than 4,000 members in and out of prison who deal in a variety of criminal enterprises, including prostitution, robbery and murder.

It has a paramilitary structure with five factions around the state, Pelz said. Each faction has a general, who is part of a steering committee known as the "Wheel," which controls all criminal aspects of the gang, according to court papers.

Four top leaders of the group were indicted in October for crimes ranging from murder to drug trafficking. Two months later, authorities issued the bulletin warning that the gang might try to retaliate against law enforcement for the investigation that also led to the arrest of 30 other members.

Conn. reaches deal on tough gun laws after Newtown

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—Connecticut lawmakers announced a deal Monday on what they called some of the toughest gun laws in the country that were proposed after the December mass shooting in the state, including a ban on new high-capacity ammunition magazines like the ones used in the massacre that left 20 children and six educators dead.

The proposal includes new registration requirements for existing magazines that carry 10 or more bullets, something of a disappointment for some family members of Newtown victims who wanted an outright ban on the possession of all high-capacity magazines and traveled to the state Capitol on Monday to ask lawmakers for it.

The package also creates what lawmakers said is the nation's first statewide dangerous weapon offender registry, creates a new "ammunition eligibility certificate," imposes immediate universal background checks for all firearms sales, and extends the state's assault weapons ban to 100 new types of firearms and requires that a weapon have only one of several features in order to be banned.

The newly banned weapons could no longer be bought or sold in Connecticut, and those legally owned already would have to be registered with the state, just like the high-capacity magazines.

"No gun owner will lose their gun," said House Minority Leader Lawrence Cafero Jr., a Norwalk Republican. "No gun owner will lose their magazines."

The bill also addresses mental health and school security measures.

The shooting Dec. 14 at Sandy Hook Elementary School reignited the gun debate in the country and led to calls for increased gun control legislation on the federal and state levels. While some other states, including neighboring New York, have strengthened their gun laws, momentum has stalled in Congress, whose members were urged by President Barack Obama last week not to forget the shooting and to capitalize on the best chance in years to stem gun violence.

Connecticut should be seen as an example for lawmakers elsewhere, said Senate President Donald E. Williams Jr., a Brooklyn Democrat.

"In Connecticut, we've broken the mold," he said. "Democrats and Republicans were able to come to an agreement on a strong, comprehensive bill. That is a message that should resound in 49 other states and in Washington, D.C. And the message is: We can get it done here and they should get it done in their respective states and nationally in Congress."

Asia

NKorea taps reformist premier amid nuclear tension

AP

In this Sunday, March 31, 2013 photo released by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) and distributed in Tokyo Monday, April 1, 2013 by the Korea News Service, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un gives a speech during a plenary meeting of the central committee of the ruling Workers' Party in Pyongyang, North Korea.

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea's parliament approved the appointment of a new premier seen by outside experts as an economic reformer one day after top party officials adopted a declaration making nuclear arms and a stronger economy the nation's top priorities.

The U.S., meanwhile, made its latest conspicuous display of firepower, announcing it had sent F-22 stealth fighter jets to participate in annual U.S.-South Korean war games that Pyongyang calls preparation for an invasion. The new South Korean president, who has a policy meant to re-engage Pyongyang with talks and aid, told her top military leaders Monday to set aside political considerations and respond strongly should North Korea attack.

The re-emergence of Pak Pong Ju as premier at an annual spring parliamentary session is seen by analysts as a clear signal that leader Kim Jong Un is moving to back up recent vows to focus on strengthened economic development. The U.N. says two-thirds of the country's 24 million people face regular food shortages.

Pak was the North's premier in 2003-2007, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry. He was sacked initially because of a proposal for an incentive-based hourly, rather than monthly, wage system deemed too similar to U.S.-style capitalism, Japan's Mainichi Shimbun newspaper reported in 2007. Pak replaces Choe Yong Rim, who is 82.

"Pak Pong Ju is the face of economic reform, such as it exists—reform with North Korean characteristics as they say," said John Delury, a professor and North Korea analyst at Seoul's Yonsei University.

Any economic changes won't be radical, Delury said, and, for the time being, they're mostly aspirational. One possible change could entail a shift of part of the country's massive military spending into the economy as a whole, he said.

Pak is widely known for spearheading reforms in 2002, when the government began allowing some markets, although it later backtracked, said Koh Yu-hwan, a North Korea analyst at Seoul's Dongguk University. His appointment could be a message to the outside world that North Korea wants to calm tension and focus more on economic revitalization, Koh said.

Pyongyang has reacted with anger to the U.S.-South Korean military drills and to a new round of U.N. and U.S. sanctions that followed its Feb. 12 underground nuclear test, the country's third. Analysts see a full-scale North Korean attack as unlikely and say the threats are more likely efforts to provoke softer policies toward Pyongyang from a new government in Seoul, to win diplomatic talks with Washington and to solidify the young North Korean leader's military credentials at home.

White House press secretary Jay Carney said Monday the U.S. has not detected any military mobilization or repositioning of forces from Pyongyang to back up the threats.

Despite the rising hostility, recent rhetoric has focused on efforts to turn around a moribund economy and nuclear development.

Pakistani woman makes history with run in May vote

AP

Badam Zari, right, addresses a news conference with her sister in Khar, capital of Pakistani tribal area of Bajur on Monday, April 1, 2013.

KHAR, Pakistan (AP)—A 40-year-old Pakistani housewife has made history by becoming the first woman to run for parliament from the country's deeply conservative tribal region bordering Afghanistan.

Badam Zari is pushing back against patriarchal traditions and braving potential attack by Islamist militants in the hope of forcing the government to focus more on helping Pakistani women.

"I want to reach the assembly to become a voice for women, especially those living in the tribal areas," Zari told The Associated Press in an interview on Monday. "This was a difficult decision, but now I am determined and hopeful society will support me."

Many of Pakistan's 180 million citizens hold fairly conservative views on the role of women in society. But those views are even more pronounced in the country's semiautonomous tribal region, a poor, isolated area in the northwest dominated by Pashtun tribesmen who follow a very conservative brand of Islam.

Most women in the tribal region are uneducated, rarely work outside the home and wear long, flowing clothes that cover most of their skin when they appear in public.

Zari, who finished high school, spoke to reporters at a press conference Monday wearing a colorful shawl wrapped around her body and head, with only her eyes showing.

Life for women in the tribal region has become even more difficult in recent years with the growing presence of Taliban militants who use the border region as their main sanctuary in the country. The militants have been waging a bloody insurgency against the government to impose Islamic law in the country and have a history of using violence to enforce their hard-line views on women.

Last fall, Taliban fighters in the northwest shot 15-year-old schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai in the head in an unsuccessful attempt to kill her because she resisted the militants' views and was a strong advocate of girls' education.

Zari is from of Bajur, one of many areas in the tribal region where the Pakistani army has been battling the Taliban. She filed the paperwork necessary to run for office on Sunday in Khar, the main town in Bajur. She was accompanied by her husband, who she said fully backed her decision to run for a seat in the National Assembly in the May 11 vote.

"This is very courageous," said Asad Sarwar, one of the top political officials in Bajur. "This woman has broken the barrier." Men in Bajur and other parts of the tribal region have historically discouraged women to vote, saying they should remain at home, according to local traditions. Even in less conservative areas, women are often expected to vote according to the wishes of male members of the family, said Farzana Bari, head of the gender studies department at Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Myanmar police say 13 children die in fire

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—A fire engulfed a mosque housing orphans in Myanmar's largest city Tuesday morning, killing at least 13 children in the blaze that police blamed on an electrical short. Riot police were deployed nearby as some Muslims gathering outside the charred building feared the fire was linked to sectarian violence that has shaken the nation. Police officer Thet Lwin said the fire was triggered by an overheated inverter "and not due to any criminal activity."

Questions in China on how H7N9 flu strain killed 2

BEIJING (AP)—Health officials say they still don't understand how a lesser-known bird flu virus was able to kill two men and seriously sicken a woman in China, but that it's unlikely that it can spread easily among humans. Two men in Shanghai became the first known human fatalities from the H7N9 bird flu virus after contracting it in February. A woman in the eastern city of Chuzhou remains in serious condition, China's National Health and Family Planning Commission said. It was unclear how the three patients became infected, the health agency said. It sought to calm fears about the virus but provided few details about each case. Authorities have not described the patients' occupations or said whether they had come into contact with birds or other animals.

Ex-US President Carter to observe Nepal elections

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)—Former United States President Jimmy Carter said Monday that his Carter Center will observe elections in Nepal, although opposition parties are threatening to disrupt the vote and the government has been unable to set a date. Carter, who arrived last week to meet political leaders, said he was asked by the government and political parties to observe the elections initially planned for June but expected to be postponed. "We don't know yet when the election will be scheduled. It has been considered for the last week of June. I think it is the general consensus, which I share, it will not be possible at this point," Carter told reporters. "The election commission and the government will decide exactly when the election will be held and how long it will take. It will likely be after the monsoon season, perhaps in November."

6 die in China mine where earlier blast killed 28

BEIJING (AP)—An explosion killed six workers Monday at a coal mine in northeast China where 28 miners were killed in a similar accident just three days earlier, state media reported, one of a string of industrial accidents across the country that is again focusing attention on lax enforcement of safety regulations. The explosion at the mine outside the city of Baishan in Jilin province left 11 other miners missing, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. The cause of the most recent accident was under investigation and it wasn't clear why work had restarted at the mine so soon after last week's deadly blast.

Further south, an explosion at the Xinyu Group Iron Works smashed its 100-ton No. 2 furnace, killing four people and leaving 32 injured Monday, Xinhua said. It said the injured were transported to a hospital but gave no word on the cause of the accident.

Staff members reached by phone at the company confirmed the explosion, but said they had no other information to provide. Local government officials declined to comment, and all refused to give their names.

Meanwhile, workers on Monday had recovered 36 bodies from the site of a massive landslide outside Tibet's capital, Lhasa, that buried 83 copper miners on Friday, Xinhua said.

Just one worker survived the disaster at the Jiama Copper Polymetallic Mine, having left the site earlier to purchase tents in the city, it said. The miners were mostly impoverished farmers from the southern province of Guizhou recruited to work in the frigid conditions at 4,600 meters (15,100 feet) above sea level.

World

6K Syrians killed in March, deadliest month yet

BEIRUT (AP)—March was the bloodiest month yet in Syria's 2-year-old conflict with more than 6,000 documented deaths, a leading anti-regime activist group said Monday, blaming the increase on heavier shelling and more violent clashes. Rami Abdul-Rahman, who heads the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said the increased toll is likely incomplete because both the Syrian army and the rebel groups fighting the government often underreport their dead in the civil war.

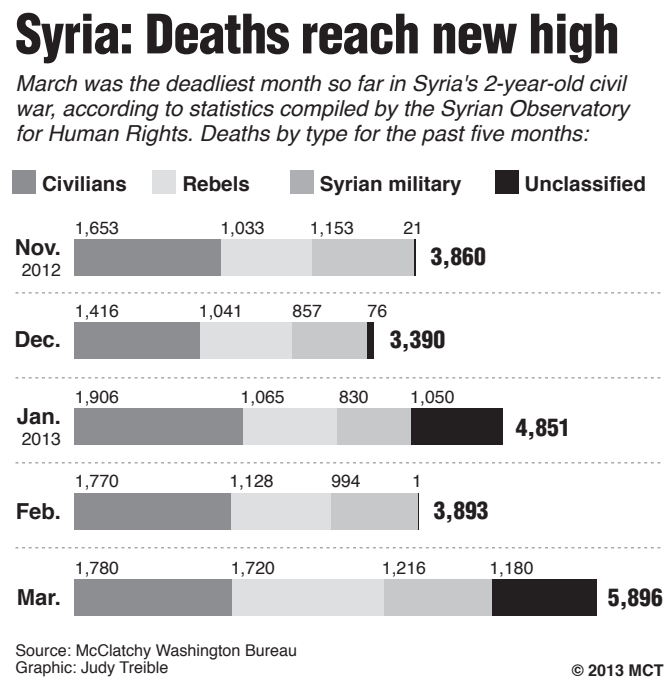
"Both sides are hiding information," Abdul-Rahman said by phone from Britain, where his group is based. "It is very difficult to get correct info on the fighters because they don't want the information to hurt morale."

The numbers, while provided by only one group, support the appraisal of the conflict offered by many Syria watchers: The civil war is largely a military stalemate that is destroying the country's social fabric and taking a huge toll on civilians.

The increase also reflects the continuing spread of major hostilities to new parts of Syria. While clashes continue in Aleppo, Damascus and Homs, Syria's three largest cities, rebels have launched an offensive in recent weeks to seize towns and army bases in the southern province of Daraa, largely with the help of an influx of foreign-funded weapons.

The Observatory, which works through a network of contacts in Syria, said those killed in March included similar numbers of combatants on both sides: 1,486 rebels and army defectors and 1,464 soldiers from the Syrian army.

But the number of civilians killed exceeded them both: 2,080 total for the month, including 298 children and 291 women.



C. African Republic coup leader adds to his roles

BANGUI, Central African Republic (AP)—Central African Republic's coup leader solidified his hold on the government Monday after announcing that he will serve as both president and defense minister, while other top posts are going to his fellow rebels. Michel Djotodia, who led the thousands of rebel fighters who overthrew longtime President Francois Bozize just over a week ago, made the announcement in a decree read late Sunday on state radio.

Not only will Djotodia hold the defense ministry, but his allies also will control the ministries of mines, commerce, communication, and security and public order, according to a decree issued on letterhead that reads "presidency of the republic."

Opposition leader Nicolas Tiangaye remains as prime minister in the new government.

Alex Vines, head of the Africa program at Chatham House, a London-based institute on international affairs, has described the coup as being about "blind ambition" despite the rebels' claims they are seeking greater assistance for their homeland in the deeply impoverished northeast. The rebel alliance that overthrew the government is known as Seleka.

AP

Michel Djotodia, the rebel leader who declared himself president over the weekend after his soldiers seized the capital, meets with members of the government armed forces, in Bangui, Central African Republic, Thursday, March 28, 2013.

"All the accounts of Seleka are that they have no development vision for CAR. It's exclusively about redistribution of patrimony from having captured the state," Vines said. "There is so little other activity—capturing the state is sort of the main source of revenue."

Thousands of Djotodia's rebels are now residing in the capital, and could be seen Monday riding on pickup trucks that were sponge-painted brown and black in a kind of homemade camouflage with "Seleka" scrawled across the sides.

Others camped out on cots in and around the state-run radio building, and some sat beside a drained swimming pool at the luxury hotel that Djotodia has transformed into his presidential palace.

The rebels are identifiable by the turbans on their heads, though others have taken to wearing clothes they took from the Central African army soldiers who fled in the face of the rebel advance and adorning them with a yellow ribbon on the shoulder.

Djotodia, who first rose to prominence as a rebel leader back in 2006, already had served as defense minister since the formation of an ill-fated national unity government in January.

In addition, there were 387 unidentified civilians and 588 unidentified fighters, most of them foreigners fighting with the rebels, bringing the March total to 6,005, Abdul-Rahman said.

He criticized the international community for not doing more to stop the bloodshed, which he said could increase.

"If there is no solution, we think the numbers will get worse in the coming months," he said.

The March toll surpassed what had previously been the deadliest month, August 2012, when airstrikes, clashes and shelling killed more than 5,400 people, Abdul-Rahman said.

His total death toll for the conflict through the end of March was 62,554, a number he acknowledged as incomplete, suggesting the true figure could be twice as high.

Besides the underreporting of dead fighters by both sides, he mentioned the tens of thousands of missing persons and captives held by the regime and the rebels. The fate of these people is rarely uncovered, he said.

He also said more than 12,000 pro-government gunmen known as "shabiha," along with government informers may have been killed by the opposition and never reported.

The constant stream of new reports, in addition to the lack of free access to much of the country, makes full investigations impossible. "Since there are more dying every day, it is very hard to go back and document those who died before," Abdul-Rahman said, calling for an independent international investigation inside Syria.

The Observatory's numbers are not as high as those given by the United Nations.

On Feb. 18, a U.N.-appointed Commission of Inquiry on Syria issued a 131-page report saying about 70,000 people had been killed in the conflict. The report compiled and corroborated death reports from a number of different sources.

Muslims worry about broader France headscarf ban

LE BOURGET, France (AP)—Because of her choice to wear a headscarf, Samia Kaddour, a Muslim, has all but abandoned trying to land a government job in France. Soon, some private sector jobs could be off limits, too.

French President Francois Hollande says he wants a new law that could extend restrictions on the wearing of prominent religious symbols in state jobs into the private sector. His new tack comes after a top French court ruled in March that a day care operator that gets some state funding unfairly fired a woman in a headscarf, sparking a political backlash.

As Christians celebrated Easter on Sunday, Kaddour attended the four-day Annual Meeting of Muslims of France in Le Bourget, north of Paris. The convention, which last year drew some 160,000 faithful and was expected to grow this year, is billed as the largest annual gathering of its kind in Europe. It is in its 30th year and ended Monday.

French law bars state employees from wearing prominent religious symbols such as Muslim headscarves, Jewish skullcaps or large Christian crosses in public schools, welfare offices or other government facilities. Two years ago, France banned Muslim veils that cover faces, such as the niqab, which has a slit for the eyes, or the mesh-screen burqa, from being worn anywhere in public.

Meeting leaders say France has made progress in accepting Muslims and noted that, unlike 30 years ago, women wearing headscarves today rarely draw suspicion, scowls or curiosity. Still, many Muslims—and even some Roman Catholics and Jews—fear France's insistence on secular values first enshrined in the French Revolution more than two centuries ago is unfairly crimping their ability to express their religious beliefs freely.

They also worry that Hollande's Socialist government, like a conservative one before it, wants to score political points.

"Islam has become a political instrument," said Kaddour, 26, who is a community activist from the English Channel port city of Le Havre and one of 10 children of Algerian-born parents who moved to France for plentiful jobs during its economic boom times decades ago. "Islam is always brandished whenever there is internal political discord." Most mainstream politicians insist Islam is not being targeted.

WORLD BRIEFS

Pope Francis still has most of his right lung

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP)—Does the pope have only one lung? Despite erroneous reports that Pope Francis has lived most of his life with just one lung, the surgery actually only removed the upper part of his right lung, and his friends and family say he remains in good health for a 76-year-old man. The Buenos Aires archdiocese and the Vatican have declined to provide medical reports or specific details about the surgery. Erroneous reports that his entire lung was removed have appeared in numerous media, including Argentine newspapers and The Associated Press, since as early as 2005, when Bergoglio was considered a potential successor to Pope John Paul II.

US blasts arrest warrant against Egypt satirist

CAIRO (AP)—The U.S. State Department said Monday that arrest warrants and the investigation of a popular Egyptian satirist and other critics of Egypt's Islamist president highlight a "disturbing trend" of growing restrictions on freedom of expression in the country. The strongly worded statement by U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland Monday came a day after Bassem Youssef, who criticizes President Mohammed Morsi and hard-line clerics on his Jon Stewart-style show, was released on bail following an interrogation into accusations he insulted Morsi and Islam. Youssef is the most prominent critic of Morsi to be called in for questioning in recent weeks, in what the opposition says is a campaign to intimidate critics amid wave after wave of political unrest in the deeply polarized country. Prosecutors deny launching a political crackdown, saying they are only implementing the law.

Focus

AP

In this April 1, 2013 photo, Antonio Hammond stands outside of his apartment in Baltimore.

Help shrinks as poverty spikes in the US

BALTIMORE (AP)—Antonio Hammond is the $18,000 man.

He's a success story for Catholic Charities of Baltimore, one of a multitude of organizations trying to haul people out of poverty in this Maryland port city where one of four residents is considered poor by U.S. government standards.

Hammond says he ended up in Baltimore three years ago, addicted to crack cocaine and snorting heroin, living in abandoned buildings where "the rats were fierce," and financing his addiction by breaking into cars and stealing copper pipes out of crumbing structures. Eighteen months after finding his way to Catholic Charities via a rehabilitation center, the 49-year-old Philadelphia native is back in the work force, clean of drugs, earning $13 an hour cleaning laboratories for the Biotech Institute of Maryland and paying taxes.

Catholic Charities, which runs a number of federally funded programs, spent $18,000 from privately donated funds to turn around Hammond's life through the organization's Christopher's Place program which provides housing and support services to recovering addicts and former prisoners.

Such success stories are in danger as $85 billion in federal government spending cuts begin squeezing services for the poor nationwide. The cuts started kicking in automatically on March 1 after feuding Democrats and Republicans failed to agree on a better plan for addressing the national deficit. They are hitting at a time of spiking poverty as the U.S. slowly climbs out of the deepest economic downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

"All I wanted to do was get high," Hammond said. "I didn't even know any more how to eat or clean myself."

Now he lives with two other men in housing subsidized by the charity, got his driver's license and bought a car. What he marvels at the most is that he has been accepted after a 20-year absence by some of his nine children. That's the best part, he said. "At least I know now they might not hate me."

The U.S. Census Bureau puts the number of Americans in poverty at levels not seen since the mid-1960s when President Lyndon B. Johnson launched the federal government's so-called War on Poverty. As President Barack Obama began his second term in January, nearly 50 million Americans—one in six—were living below the income line that defines poverty, according to the bureau. A family of four that earns less than $23,021 a year is listed as living in poverty. The bureau said 20 percent of the country's children are poor.

Although it is far from the country's poorest city, Baltimore's poverty rate far outstrips the national average of one in six.

Catholic Charities of Baltimore is a conduit for state and federal money for programs designed to help the poor. The charity plays a major role in administering Head Start, a federal program that provides educational services for low-income pre-school children and frees single mothers to find work without the huge expense of childcare.

The spending cuts, known as the sequester, are going to hit Head Start especially hard.

"Before the sequester only half of the need was being met. Now, after the cuts fully take effect, there will be 900 children already in the program who won't be able to take part," said William McCarthy, executive director of Catholic Charities.

There is no question the national belt-tightening "will deepen and increase poverty," said McCarthy, citing the cuts in long-term care for poor seniors including assisted living and nursing care, and fewer low-income housing spaces, among other ripple effects.

Under the spending cuts, Baltimore Housing Commissioner Paul T. Graziano said his agency faces a $25 million shortfall in funds to help poor people with housing. There are 35,000 people on the waiting list. He also lamented cuts that will hamper the city's efforts to clean up or demolish blighted neighborhoods. Baltimore has 15,000 vacant and abandoned structures as a result of a steep population decline over the past half century.

"It's very, very disheartening. We take a couple of steps forward and then fall back at least one. The private sector isn't going to fix these neighborhoods. I view these things as investments, not expenditures. These things are an investment in the future that bring returns many times over," he said.

While the U.S. economy is slowly recovering, improvements for those deep in poverty do not keep pace with the cuts now in place. The spending reductions going into effect will hit hardest at Americans whose prospects are not directly tied to the economy—people like Antonio Hammond and children in the Head Start pre-school programs.

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake said Baltimore depends on federal grants and funding for 12 percent of its budget. The austerity cuts "to housing programs-as well as those to public safety, health, and education-will have an adverse effect on Baltimore and throughout the country," she said.

The cuts, which will also hit U.S. defense spending, were designed two years ago as an incentive for lawmakers to avoid a standoff over the federal debt and a potential government shutdown. The measures were seen as so onerous as to force Republicans and Democrats in Congress to reach a compromise spending plan. But compromise proved impossible before the March 1 deadline, and what were once seen as unthinkable cuts automatically went into effect.

Democrats want a deficit reduction plan that includes some spending cuts and tax increases on the wealthy. Republicans balk at any more tax increases and insist the problem should be addressed solely by reigning in spending. That feud continues as the two sides battle out future fiscal issues.

Republicans want to see even more cuts in next year's budget, reductions that would, by and large, return military spending to pre-sequester levels and provide big tax benefits to wealthy Americans.

A 2014 budget plan proposed by Rep. Paul Ryan, the vice presidential candidate on the unsuccessful Republican presidential ticket last year, would be particularly tough on social safety net programs. His plan would slash $135 billion over the next decade from the program that provides food aid for low-income Americans. Nearly three-quarters of households receiving help from the program include children, who, census figures show, are the group hardest hit by poverty.

Ryan's plan would also turn the government's Medicare health insurance program for Americans age 65 and over into a voucher system, providing direct government payments to seniors who would then try to buy insurance on the private market.

Ryan defends his drive for austerity as necessary to begin shrinking the country's $16 trillion national debt.

"If we never balance the budget, if we keep adding deficit upon deficit we have a debt crisis like Europe has. That means seniors lose their health care benefit, that means the people in the safety net see the net cut and they go in the street. That means you have a recession. These are the things we prevent from happening by balancing the budget. Balancing the budget is but a means to an end. It's growing the economy, it's creating opportunity, it's getting government to live within its means," he said in an interview with Fox News.

Obama backs increasing taxes on the wealthy while instituting smaller government spending cuts, a plan that would reduce deficit spending but more slowly. He and most fellow Democrats argue that European-style austerity has not worked there and will harm the U.S. recovery from the Great Recession.

It's an ideological fight that dates back decades. Republicans work from the premise that by unleashing the private sector and removing government controls, all Americans will prosper along with the economy and benefits will flow down to lower-income earners. Democrats insist there is an essential role for government in putting a floor under the poor and helping local governments with problems that the private sector cannot or will not shoulder.

Some worry the gap between rich and poor in the U.S. will keep widening under the austerity measures.

According to a report by the non-partisan Congressional Research Service late last year, "U.S. income distribution appears to be among the most unequal of all major industrialized countries and the United States appears to be among the nations experiencing the greatest increases in measures of income."

Mary Anne O'Donnell, director of community services at Catholic Charities of Baltimore, said increasing income inequality has shown itself dramatically during the U.S. downturn.

"In the last three years, there's been a great change in the kinds of people we are serving. There are increasing numbers of people who owned a home, lost their jobs, end up living in their car and are coming with children to our soup kitchen," she said.

Her organization spent $126 million in the last fiscal year feeding the poor, helping them find jobs and housing, running nursing homes and putting men like Hammond back on their feet.

Of that figure, $98 million came from various programs funded by the city, state and federal governments. Those now face the big cuts as politicians in Washington fail to find a compromise.

Campus Life

Schools shift from textbooks to tablets

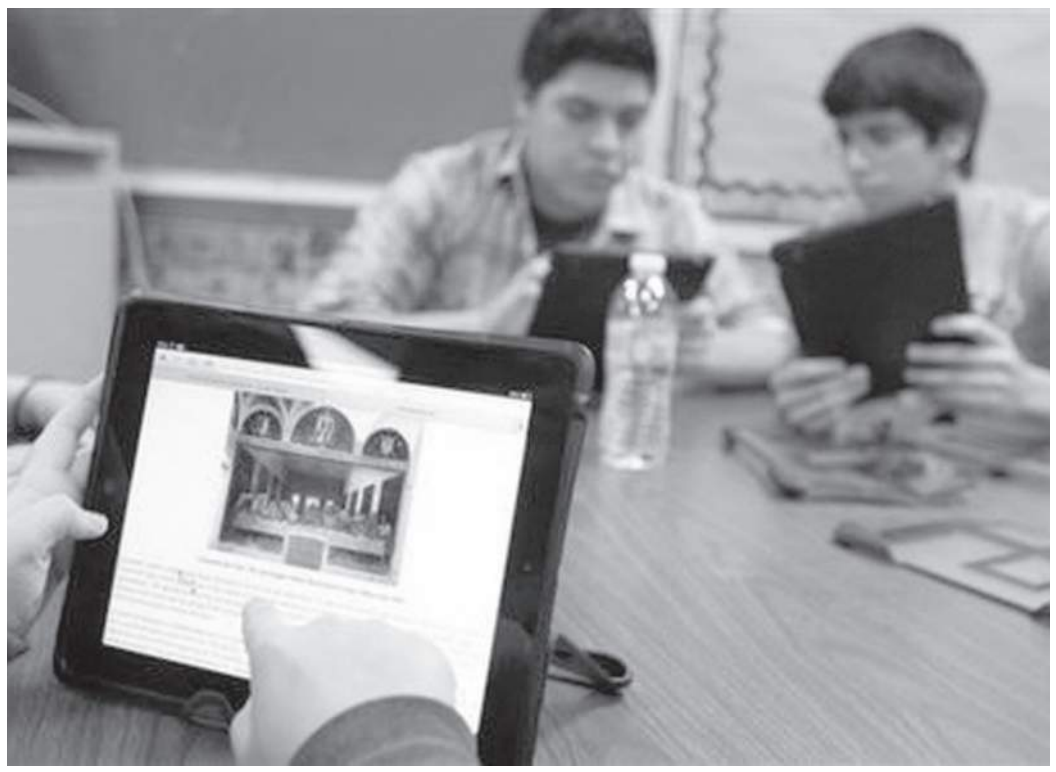
WASHINGTON (AP)—Well before the cleanup from Superstorm Sandy was in full swing, students could read about the weather system that slammed the East Coast in their textbooks.

Welcome to the new digital bookcase, where traditional ink-and-paper textbooks have given way to iPads and book bags are getting lighter. Publishers update students' books almost instantly with the latest events or research. Schools are increasingly looking to the handheld tablets as a way to sustain students' interest, reward their achievements and, in some cases, actually keep per-student costs down.

"We must use technology to empower teachers and improve the way students learn," said Joel Klein, a former New York City schools' chief who now leads News Corp.'s education tablet program. "At its best, education technology will change the face of education by helping teachers manage the classroom and personalize instruction."

News Corp. introduced their Amplify tablet during a breakfast Wednesday at the South by Southwest conference in Austin, Texas. Priced at $299, the 10-inch unit runs on a school's wireless Internet system and comes with software for teachers to watch each student's activities, offer instant polls and provide anonymous quizzes to gauge student understanding.

Orders placed by June 30 will be ready for the start of the school year in the fall, officials at Rupert Murdoch's company said, adding yet another platform for schools to consider.



AP

In this Feb. 27, 2012 file photo, Ysabella Ortegon, 16, reads about Leonardo da Vinci's painting "The Last Supper," while working on her new iPad at McAllen Memorial High School in McAllen, Texas.

Putting a device in every student's hand is not a pie-in-the-sky dream. Some 2,000 schools already have partnered with Google to use its lightweight Chromebooks, which start at $199. Some 20 million students and teachers are already using them, company officials said.

And a study from the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project found that more than 40 percent of students or teachers use some sort of tablet in their Advanced Placement and National Writing Project classrooms.

"When you think about it, these are A.P. classes and National Writing Project classes, and 4 in 10 say they are using these devices," said Kristen Purcell, associate director for research at Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project. "That's 6 in 10 who aren't using them. We still have a lot of room for growth."

In coming years, growth seems to be the norm.

Christine Quinn, the speaker of the New York City Council, has suggested replacing textbooks—they cost the city $100 million a year—with tablets. Schools in Los Angeles last month allocated $50 million to start buying tablets for every student; the project is expected to cost $500 million by the time it is completed. Schools in McAllen, Texas, distributed 6,800 Apple tablets last year at a cost of $20.5 million.

But it's not just the biggest school districts making the shift. The Eanes Independent School District in Austin is distributing more than 2,000 iPads to every student, from kindergarteners to high school seniors. The cost: $1.2 million.

Students, unlike some of their parents, aren't blinking.

"The biggest challenge is that they're growing up as digital natives, but when they get to the school door, they have to leave that at the door," said Scott Kinney, who trains teachers on how to use Discovery Education's products, which work on various platforms. "Kids are very comfortable with these things, so why aren't we reaching them in a way that's most beneficial to students?"

Discovery, the top digital content provider to U.S. schools, recognizes its potential to keep students interested with the most up-to-date material. For instance, it updated its science lessons for students in grades six through high school to incorporate Superstorm Sandy within weeks of its making landfall.

Students traced the path of the storm using digital maps, compared the changes in barometric pressure with wind speed and proposed cleanup plans for the region—even while cleanup crews were still working.

That fast turnaround is one of the main advantages of shifting to digital textbooks. So, too, are their language functions. For instance, a student working on his homework with a parent who isn't fluent in English can switch to Spanish. The textbooks can toggle between languages so students who aren't native speakers can check their understanding.

Another advantage: the digital books' cost. Discovery's lessons—branded "Techbooks" that run on laptops, desktops, iPads or other tablets—run between $38 and $55 per student for a six-year subscription. The average traditional textbook is $70 per student.

More than a half-million students are using Discovery's texts in 35 states on various platforms.

But technology doesn't guarantee success.

"If the teacher doesn't know how to use it, obviously it's not going to make much difference," said Mevlut Kaya, a computer teacher at Orlando Science Schools, a charter program that offered each student a leased iPad if he or she achieved a 3.5 grade point average.

In classrooms at the private Avenues: The World School in New York City, students at all levels receive an iPad and then receive an iPad and MacBook Air in middle school. The school doesn't buy textbooks and, in most cases, teachers automatically send students their reading and homework assignments over the school's wireless Internet network.

It's a system that's normal for students, who often already have mastered the technology.

"They live in the world where they have these distractions, where they have an iPad on their desk or a smartphone in their pocket," said Dirk Delo, the school's chief technology officer.

That's not to say there should be an instant shift, even technology evangelists warned.

"All too often, the technology programs I observed seemed more focused on bells and whistles, gadgets and gizmos, than on improving learning," Klein said. "And in many school districts, teachers have been handed technology they either don't think is effective or don't know how to use. The last thing we need is just another pile of unused laptops in the back or the classroom."

New rules aim to get rid of junk foods in schools

By **MARY CLARE JALONICK**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP)—Most candy, high-calorie drinks and greasy meals could soon be on a food blacklist in the nation's schools.

For the first time, the government is proposing broad new standards to make sure all foods sold in schools are more healthful.

Under the new rules the Agriculture Department proposed Friday, foods like fatty chips, snack cakes, nachos and mozzarella sticks would be taken out of lunch lines and vending machines. In their place would be foods like baked chips, trail mix, diet sodas, lower-calorie sports drinks and low-fat hamburgers.

The rules, required under a child nutrition law passed by Congress in 2010, are part of the government's effort to combat childhood obesity. While many schools already have improved their lunch menus and vending machine choices, others still are selling high-fat, high-calorie foods.

Under the proposal, the Agriculture Department would set fat, calorie, sugar and sodium limits on almost all foods sold in schools. Current standards already regulate the nutritional content of school breakfasts and lunches that are subsidized by the federal government, but most lunchrooms also have "a la carte" lines that sell other foods. Food sold through vending machines and in other ways outside the lunchroom has never before been federally regulated.

"Parents and teachers work hard to instill healthy eating habits in our kids, and these efforts should be supported when kids walk through the schoolhouse door," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said.

Most snacks sold in school would have to have less than 200 calories. Elementary and middle schools could sell only water, low-fat milk or 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice. High schools could sell some sports drinks, diet sodas and iced teas, but the calories would be limited. Drinks would be limited to 12-ounce portions in middle schools and to 8-ounce portions in elementary schools.

The standards will cover vending machines, the "a la carte" lunch lines, snack bars and any other foods regularly sold around school. They would not apply to in-school fundraisers or bake sales, though states have the power to regulate them. The new guidelines also would not apply to after-school concessions at school games or theater events, goodies brought from home for classroom celebrations, or anything students bring for their own personal consumption.

The new rules are the latest in a long list of changes designed to make foods served in schools more healthful and accessible. Nutritional guidelines for the subsidized lunches were revised last year and put in place last fall. The 2010 child nutrition law also provided more money for schools to serve free and reduced-cost lunches and required more meals to be served to hungry kids.

Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, has been working for two decades to take junk foods out of schools. He calls the availability of unhealthful foods around campus a "loophole" that undermines the taxpayer money that helps pay for the healthier subsidized lunches.

"USDA's proposed nutrition standards are a critical step in closing that loophole and in ensuring that our schools are places that nurture not just the minds of American children but their bodies as well," Harkin said.

Last year's rules faced criticism from some conservatives, including some Republicans in Congress, who said the government shouldn't be telling kids what to eat. Mindful of that backlash, the Agriculture Department exempted in-school fundraisers from federal regulation and proposed different options for some parts of the rule, including the calorie limits for drinks in high schools, which would be limited to either 60 calories or 75 calories in a 12-ounce portion.

The department also has shown a willingness to work with schools to resolve complaints that some new requirements are hard to meet. Last year, for example, the government relaxed some limits on meats and grains in subsidized lunches after school nutritionists said they weren't working.

Schools, the food industry, interest groups and other critics or supporters of the new proposal will have 60 days to comment and suggest changes. A final rule could be in place as soon as the 2014 school year.

Margo Wootan, a nutrition lobbyist for the Center for Science in the Public Interest, said surveys by her organization show that most parents want changes in the lunchroom.

"Parents aren't going to have to worry that kids are using their lunch money to buy candy bars and a Gatorade instead of a healthy school lunch," she said.

The food industry has been onboard with many of the changes, and several companies worked with Congress on the child nutrition law two years ago. Major beverage companies have already agreed to take the most caloric sodas out of schools. But those same companies, including Coca-Cola and PepsiCo, also sell many of the non-soda options, like sports drinks, and have lobbied to keep them in vending machines.

A spokeswoman for the American Beverage Association, which represents the soda companies, says they already have greatly reduced the number of calories that kids are consuming at school by pulling out the high-calorie sodas.

Life & Style

'BUCKWILD' star, 2 others found dead in W.Va.

SISSONVILLE, W.Va. (AP)—Shain Gandee lived for the outdoors, often going on muddy, off-road thrill rides in the hills near his West Virginia home. A recent late-night escapade ended in tragedy for the MTV reality show cast member and two others.

The popular "BUCKWILD" cast member was found dead Monday inside a sport utility vehicle belonging to his family that was found partially submerged in a deep mud pit about a mile from his home near Sissonville, authorities said. Also inside were the bodies of his uncle and another man.

Kanawha County Sheriff's Cpl. B.D. Humphreys said the red-and-white 1984 Ford Bronco's muffler was below the surface and that mud covered the passenger side. No foul play is suspected.

Authorities said the cause of the deaths was still under investigation and they refused to speculate on what happened. If the muffler was submerged and the engine kept running, it's possible the cabin of the vehicle could have filled with fatal carbon monoxide from the exhaust.

Shain, nicknamed "Gandee Candy" by fans, was a breakout star of the show that followed the antics of a group of young friends enjoying their wild country lifestyle. It was filmed last year, mostly around Sissonville and Charleston. Many of its rowdy exploits were his idea. In one episode, he turned a dump truck into a swimming pool.

Gandee was a true outdoorsman, shedding modern conveniences such as cell phones and computers for his proud redneck ways. He loved to hunt, ride all-terrain vehicles and go "mudding," or off-road driving. He went mudding in the show's first episode and ruined his pickup truck's motor.

"Shain always rides with these kids in four-wheelers and trucks," said a neighbor, Swanna Frampton, who had known him since he was a small child. "They were just out riding and having a good time."

Frampton said the 21-year-old Gandee "loved to live and have fun. He was a great person. He did what (the show) wanted him to do, but he wasn't like that. He was a real person. If you needed help, if (you) needed something, he would come help you no matter what."

Humphreys said Gandee, his 48-year-old uncle, David Gandee, and 27-year-old Donald Robert Myers were last seen around 3 a.m. Sunday at a bar and they told people they were going driving off-road.

AP

This Jan. 2, 2013 file photo shows Shain Gandee, from MTV's "Buckwild" reality series in New York.

State police were getting ready to send out an aviation unit to search for the men when authorities received a call Monday morning. Humphreys said the SUV was found by one of Shain Gandee's friends next to a trail used by four-wheel drive vehicles, about 15 miles outside of Charleston.

The terrain in the Thaxton Hollow area was "very muddy, very rough," Humphreys said, and responders had to use all-terrain vehicles to get to the site. Humphreys did not provide details on the condition of the bodies.

Kanawha County Commission President Kent Carper said the news was devastating for the small community near Charleston.

"It's a very sad day for the Sissonville area and for these families," he said. "This is a small community, and most of us know directly members of these families. We're keeping them in our hearts and prayers."

MTV issued a statement saying it was shocked and saddened to learn of its star's death.

"We are waiting for more information but at this time, our main concern is for the Gandee family and their friends," the statement said. "Our thoughts and prayers are with them. Shain had a magnetic personality, with a passion for life that touched everyone he met and we will miss him dearly."

Shooting for the second season of "BUCKWILD" had begun, but MTV spokesman Jake Urbanski said Monday afternoon it has been suspended.

MTV said the half-hour series in the old "Jersey Shore" time slot was pulling in an average of 3 million viewers per episode since its premiere and was the No. 1 original cable series on Thursday nights among 12- to 34-year-olds.

Shain Gandee is the third BUCKWILD cast member to make headlines.

Last week, 24-year-old Salwa Amin was sent back to jail for violating the terms of her bond following a February arrest. She was charged with two counts of drug possession with intent to deliver and initially jailed on $200,000 bond. That was later reduced to $100,000, but Amin remained behind bars without bond on Monday.

State Police say a multi-agency task force arrested Amin and two other people at a Summersville residence after receiving a tip from an informant. A search found oxycodone pills, heroin and $3,000 in cash.

Another cast mate, Michael Douglas Burford, was charged in February with driving under the influence.

Urbanski said none of Gandee's cast mates was available to do an interview Monday, and none immediately planned to issue a statement. But their feelings came through on Twitter, where Ashley Whitt called her friend "the most amazing person I've ever known."

"I know you will be watching over me every time I hit a mudhole. You will always be my best friend, I love you!" she wrote.

Cast mate Cara Parrish and others asked fans to pray for Gandee's parents, Loretta and Dale. "This is the emptiest I've ever felt," she wrote in a tweet.

CBS: No regrets on Ware injury coverage

NEW YORK (AP)—The chairman of CBS Sports had no regrets about banning further replays of Louisville basketball player Kevin Ware's gruesome broken leg and says if anyone wants to watch it on the Internet, that's fine with him.

CBS aired two quick replays Sunday from a wide enough distance for viewers to see the leg land awkwardly, but not any blood or bone. It hasn't been shown since on CBS.

"In today's world, if you want to see a piece of video instantaneously that you just saw on television, there are a million ways to do that," Sean McManus said Monday. "I've seen statistics on the millions of views this piece of footage has had on YouTube and I have no problem with that."

Ware was injured after attempting to block a shot in the Cardinals' regional final victory over Duke. The sight of his tibia bone protruding from his skin left coach Rick Pitino and his teammates in tears. Ware was operated on later Sunday and is expected to watch Louisville's Final Four appearance Saturday from the bench in Atlanta.

The network received praise for restraint, although McManus said he knew people would say CBS should have shown it more because the network was in a position to document history.

Several postings of CBS' coverage were quickly available with a search for Ware's name Monday afternoon.

"If people want to go watch the footage for whatever reason, they have a right to do so," McManus said. "I just didn't think we had any obligation to be the facilitator of putting that footage back on the screen. We documented it, we described it and we showed it, and I think that was enough." It's considerably different from when Washington Redskins quarterback Joe Theismann broke his leg during a Monday Night Football game in 1985. It was equally horrific, with bone jutting through skin. Back then, about the only way a viewer could see it again is if a television producer decided to show the replay, said Jeff Billings, a sports media professor at the University of Alabama.

Aside from the availability of footage online now, many viewers have DVRs that enabled them to replay the incident as much as they wanted, Billings said.

"Current technology makes it a whole lot easier for them to take the high road," he said.

CBS concentrated on the methods it had to tell the story that others did not have—access to players and coaches and pictures of their reactions, he said.

The unedited video was hard to find on national news outlets within 24 hours, when it was still a fresh news story. CNN aired the sequence, but blurred out Ware's leg so the break was not visible. Fox News Channel and MSNBC did not show the video, representatives said.

ABC's "Good Morning America" showed footage, again with the leg blurred. NBC's "Today" show and the CBS morning news program did not show it.

At ESPN, executives set specific guidelines: Producers had discretion to use it on their own programs but they were to only show it once, not air it in slow motion and warn viewers in advance. Through Monday afternoon, spokesman Josh Krulewitz said he did not believe the network had shown it.

McManus said CBS producers had not discussed whether the footage will be seen again; opportunities may come if Ware shows up at the Final Four this weekend. But he said he didn't see any reason why it should be.

"I just think that it's not necessary," he said. "It's not journalistically important that we do that now because we told the story. I think we'll move on from that footage."

AP

In this photo released by the University of Louisville, injured Louisville guard Kevin Ware lies in a hospital bed holding the NCAA Regional Championship trophy flanked by coach Rick Pitino, left, and former Louisville assistant coach Richard Pitino, Monday, April 1, 2013, in Louisville, Ky.

Decisions like the one made by McManus and his producers are made by broadcasters globally.

In Britain, sports broadcasters often self-censor footage they feel might distress viewers.

Often an incident, such as a dangerous tackle in football, will be frozen at the point of contact to judge a referee's decision but no further footage will be shown.

Sky Sports, which is operated by BSkyB, chose not to show replays in 2008 after then-Arsenal striker Eduardo da Silva's left leg was broken following a tackle by Martin Taylor during a Premier League match at Birmingham.

During an FA Cup match being broadcast globally in March 2012, then-Bolton midfielder Fabrice Muamba collapsed after suffering cardiac arrest on the pitch at Tottenham.

ESPN's British channel, which was broadcasting the match live, showed no close-ups as Muamba, who survived, received treatment on the turf, instead it focused on the reaction of other players or wide shots of the stadium.

Obamas welcome children to annual Easter Egg Roll

WASHINGTON (AP)—An amused President Barack Obama read a children's book to a gathering of boys and girls at the White House, then peppered them with questions: Had any of them lost a tooth? Had any climbed trees? Had any fallen after climbing?

It was all part of the annual White House Easter Egg Roll, which attracted 30,000 children and parents to the Executive Mansion's South Lawn on Monday for a day of festivities.

Obama, with his dog Bo seated beside him, narrated the popular illustrated book "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom" about alphabet letters and their adventures climbing up a coconut tree.

"So clearly the alphabet is full of troublemakers," the president concluded after offering his rendition.

Moments earlier, speaking from the White House's Truman Balcony, Obama thanked the crowd on the sunny springtime day before joining in the egg roll.

Obama high-fived the contestants and consoled 5-year-old Donovan Frazier of Scranton, Pa., who was sitting on the ground in tears.

"What's wrong," the president asked, scooping him into a hug.

The president also joined professional basketball players for a game of hoops with several children. He joined the WNBA team with a couple little girls, and their group was twice victorious in a shoot-out against the boys.

Obama was less successful on his own—taking 15 tries to sink a basket. "Oh, man," he said after a free throw teetered on the rim and fell out.

AP

President Barack Obama eyes the ball during a tennis game at the annual Easter Egg Roll on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, Monday, April 1, 2013.

"The president doesn't get to practice probably as much as he'd like to," Obama's press secretary, Jay Carney, later told reporters.

On a day that kids devote to bunny-shaped chocolates and jelly beans, first lady Michelle Obama was able to stress her mission of physical fitness and healthy eating habits.

"Eat your vegetables," she declared, after reading "Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs" to children in a story time area nestled under a tree. The couple's daughters, Malia and Sasha, shared reading "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?"

Mrs. Obama also joined chef Anne Burrell of the Food Network and TV anchor Al Roker at the Kids' Kitchen. The group sang, "put a little love in your food," as they prepared orecchiette with broccoli rabe pesto. The first lady said the ear-shaped pasta with vegetables, Italian sausage and nuts was a grown-up, sophisticated alternative to spaghetti.

The South Lawn was transformed into a kaleidoscope of colors as boys and girls played games to the sounds of kids' show tunes, snacked on apples and got a chance to meet professional athletes and entertainers.

The White House confirmed that among the thousands of families at the egg roll were some from Newtown, Conn., where a mass school shooting took place in December. They did not offer additional details, citing privacy reasons. The family of slain Chicago teen Hadiya Pendleton also attended the event. An official confirmed that Hadiya's mother, Cleopatra Cowley-Pendleton, and brother Nathaniel Pendleton Jr., 10, who played tennis with the president as part of the day's activities, attended the egg roll.

Hadiya, 15, was gunned down in a park close to the Obama's Chicago home days after performing at the president's second inauguration. The first lady attended Hadiya's funeral and sat with her parents at this year's State of the Union speech.

The White House Easter Egg Roll came off despite earlier warnings from the White House that budget battles could have forced the event's cancellation. White House tours have been called off because of government-wide spending cuts.

One highlight of this year's event was the "Eggtivity Zone," in which athletes and coaches helped teach kids how to play sports. Among the stars booked for this duty were Minnesota Vikings running back Adrian Peterson, NASCAR driver Danica Patrick, gymnast John Orozco and Washington Wizards point guard John Wall.

Two of the younger celebrities in Monday's lineup are Oscar-nominated actress Quvenzhane Wallis, star of "Beasts of the Southern Wild," and Robby Novak, who plays "Kid President" in a series of popular YouTube videos. Elmo, Jordin Sparks, The Wanted, Austin Mahone, Coco Jones and other "Sesame Street" Muppets were to perform.

The National Park Service, which organizes the event, says it's largely funded by sales of commemorative wooden eggs, plus some private donations. The park service would not say how much the event costs.

April Fools: YouTube shut down, Google adds smells

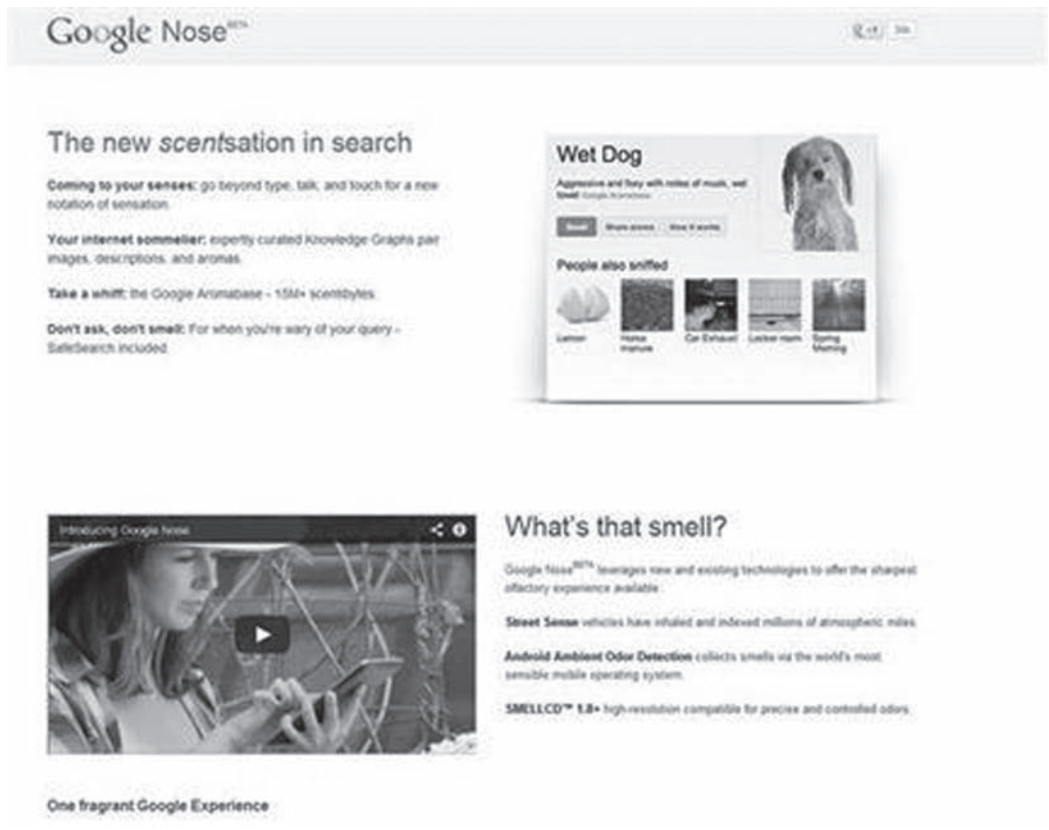
NEW YORK (AP)—Twitter did away with vowels, Google unveiled a button to add smells and the cast of the 1990s sitcom "Wings" launched a Kickstarter campaign.

The digital world celebrated April Fools' Day with the rollout of mock innovations and parody makeovers. Many of the top online destinations spent Monday mocking themselves and, in Google's case, playfully trying to lure users into pressing their noses against their computer screens.

Google, having already debuted its wearable Google Glass, on Monday showcased Google Nose to add scents to it search results. It urged visitors to lean in close and take a deep whiff for search results such as "unattended litter box."

"In the fast-paced world that we live in, we don't always have time to stop and smell the roses," product manager Jon Wooly said in a video. "Now with Google Nose Beta, the roses are just a click away."

YouTube, despite 72 hours of video uploaded every minute, said it was shutting down. The Google Inc.-owned video site joked that its eight-year rise was merely a lengthy talent search. At the end of the day, nominees were to no longer be accepted so judges could, for the next 10 years, sift through the billions of videos and declare a winner.


Google Nose
The new scentsation in search
Coming to your senses: go beyond type, talk, and touch for a new notation of sensation
Your internet sommelier: expertly curated Knowledge Graphs pair images, descriptions, and aromas
Take a whiff: the Google Aromabase - 15M+ scentbytes
Don't ask, don't smell: For when you're wary of your query - SafeSearch included
Wet Dog
People also sniffed
Lemon
Horse manure
Car Exhaust
Locker room
Spring Morning
Introducing Google Nose
What's that smell?
Street Sense vehicles have inhaled and indexed millions of atmospheric miles
Android Ambient Odor Detection collects smells via the world's most sensible mobile operating system
SMELLCD™ 1.0+ high-resolution compatible for precise and controlled odors
One fragrant Google Experience

AP

This frame grab image released by Google shows the Google Nose site, a parody site in celebration of April Fools' Day.

Instead of linking to a way to donate money, the mock campaigns led users to charities including the Make-a-Wish Foundation: "Please channel that giving energy into one of these very real, very worthy charities," read the site, slyly suggesting a more deserving cause for donation than Kickstarter projects.

Twitter, not content with the brevity of 140 characters, said it was "annncng" Twttr, a service that would limit messages to just consonants. In an apparent dig at the splitting in half of Netflix memberships between DVD and streaming, Twitter said users would now have to pay $5 a month for the premium use of vowels.

Netflix, meanwhile, boasted joke genre categories such as "Reality TV about people with no concept of reality."

Hulu offered a new slate of programming for its video site, presenting fictional series as if real, completed shows. "30 Rock" fans were baited with the promise of an actual "The Rural Juror" (a fake film frequently alluded to on "30 Rock" starring Jane Krakowski's character), and "Arrested Development" watchers were tempted by finally getting to see an episode of "Mock Trial with J. Reinhold."

Google has always been one of the most enthusiastic April Fools' Day observers, and on Monday it trotted out an extensive lineup of satire. It also added a "treasure map mode" to Google Maps, complete with "underwater street view," and trumpeted Gmail Blue, in which the revolutionary upgrade is the simple addition of the color blue.

The comedy site Funny or Die parodied the recent Kickstarter campaign for a "Veronica Mars" movie with a number of crowd-funding campaigns for other 1990s shows, including "Wings" and "Family Matters." The mock campaigns included videos with original cast members trapped by nostalgia.

"You've been asking for it for years," "Wings" star Crystal Bernard says in a video asking for $87 million. "Think of it like a $1,000 ticket to the film. Or $20,000!"

'G.I. Joe' earns $40.5M at weekend box office

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"G.I. Joe: Retaliation" conquered the weekend box office.

The shoot-'em-up sequel starring Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Bruce Willis and Channing Tatum as the military action figures brought to life earned $40.5 million over the weekend.

The top 20 movies at U.S. and Canadian theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled Monday by Hollywood.com are:

1. **"G.I. Joe: Retaliation,"** Paramount, $40,501,814, 3,719 locations, $10,891 average, $51,008,689, one week.

2. **"The Croods,"** Fox/DreamWorks Animation, $26,705,868, 4,065 locations, $6,570 average, $88,887,945, two weeks.

3. **"Tyler Perry's Temptation,"** Lionsgate, $21,641,679, 2,047 locations, $10,572 average, $21,641,679, one week.

4. **"Olympus Has Fallen,"** FilmDistrict, $14,147,416, 3,106 locations, $4,555 average, $54,890,085, two weeks.

5. **"Oz the Great and Powerful,"** Disney, $11,702,316, 3,324 locations, $3,521 average, $198,374,716, four weeks.

6. **"The Host,"** Open Road Films, $10,600,112, 3,202 locations, $3,310 average, $10,600,112, one week.

7. **"The Call,"** Sony, $4,925,675, 2,439 locations, $2,020 average, $39,605,891, three weeks.

8. **"Admission,"** Focus Features, $3,235,263, 2,161 locations, $1,497 average, $11,744,141, two weeks.

9. **"Spring Breakers,"** A24, $2,774,145, 1,379 locations, $2,012 average, $10,074,434, three weeks.

10. **"The Incredible Burt Wonderstone,"** Warner Bros., $1,343,025, 1,575 locations, $853 average, $20,629,646, three weeks.

11. **"Identity Thief,"** Universal, $1,098,215, 1,082 locations, $1,015 average, $129,916,105, eight weeks.

12. **"Jack the Giant Slayer,"** Warner Bros., $1,019,062, 1,080 locations, $944 average, $61,399,384, five weeks.

13. **"Silver Linings Playbook,"** Weinstein Co., $900,927, 752 locations, $1,198 average, $128,712,563, 20 weeks.

14. **"Snitch,"** Lionsgate, $444,457, 746 locations, $596 average, $41,353,859, six weeks.

15. **"Life of Pi,"** Fox, $427,260, 340 locations, $1,257 average, $123,321,125, 19 weeks.

16. **"Safe Haven,"** Relativity Media, $387,754, 550 locations, $705 average, $69,811,436, seven weeks.

17. **"Quartet,"** Weinstein Co., $382,271, 302 locations, $1,266 average, $16,599,664, 12 weeks.

18. **"21 and Over,"** Relativity Media, $302,277, 344 locations, $879 average, $24,952,089, five weeks.

19. **"The Place Beyond the Pines,"** Focus, $279,457, 4 locations, $69,864 average, $279,457, one week.

20. **"Escape From Planet Earth,"** Weinstein Co., $235,117, 977 locations, $241 average, $53,927,096, seven weeks.

AP

South Korean actor Byung-hun Lee, a cast member in "G.I. Joe: Retaliation," poses at the Los Angeles premiere of the film at the TCL Chinese Theatre on Thursday, March 28, 2013 in Los Angeles.

Rapper Rick Ross explains lyrics on `U.O.E.N.O.'

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Rapper Rick Ross says critics have misinterpreted his lyrics on Rocko's "U.O.E.N.O" after uproar from women's advocacy groups.

Ross raps about giving a woman the drug MDMA, known as Molly, and having his way with a woman in the song, "and she ain't even know it."

Although the song was released in January, the lyrics gained widespread notice last week when women's groups began to complain. Petitions were issued, including one asking Reebok to withdraw its advertising agreement with Ross.

The Miami-based rapper said in an interview on New Orleans' Q93.3 that "there was a misunderstanding with the lyric, a misinterpretation." He says the term "rape" was never used and it's not something condoned by him, his camp or hip-hop in general.

Messages to Ross' publicist weren't returned.

AP

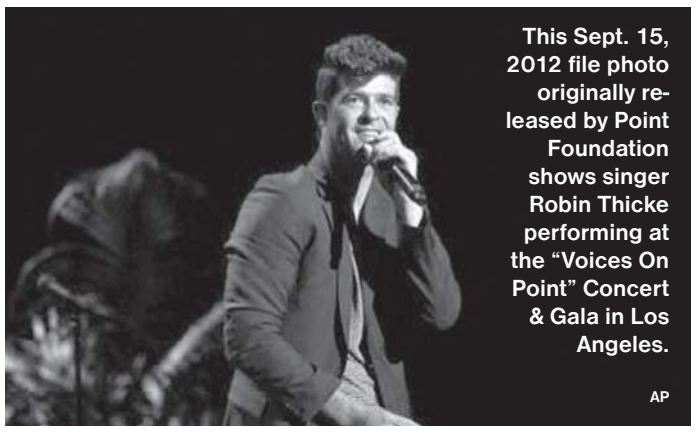
This July 7, 2012 file photo shows rapper Rick Ross performing during the OpenAir music festival in Frauenfeld, Switzerland.

Thicke's video with nude models gets YouTube ban

NEW YORK (AP)—Robin Thicke's new music video is too hot for YouTube.

A representative for the R&B crooner said Monday that his unrated video for "Blurred Lines" was banned from the website. The clip features nude models prowling around Thicke and rappers T.I. and Pharrell.

A rep for YouTube didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment. The video is still playing on the music video website Vevo.



This Sept. 15, 2012 file photo originally released by Point Foundation shows singer Robin Thicke performing at the "Voices On Point" Concert & Gala in Los Angeles.

AP

Thicke's unrated clip was released last week and garnered more than 1 million views in days. It became a water cooler topic on the blogs and entertainment websites. The original video was released a week before and has 1.3 million views.

Thicke said in an interview last week that he had sought the approval of his wife, actress Paula Patton, to shoot with nude models.

NBC's Wolfe, Gosk, expecting baby in August

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Today" weekend anchor Jenna Wolfe says she and NBC news correspondent Stephanie Gosk are expecting a baby girl in August.

A smiling, joking Wolfe made her announcement on NBC's morning show Wednesday, saying, "I'm quite pregnant, actually." The baby is due in mid-August, the 39-year-old Wolfe said.

"You kept a secret pretty good," "Today" anchor Savannah Guthrie told Wolfe.

In a blog posted on the "Today" website, Wolfe said she and Gosk, 40, were two years into their relationship when they realized they wanted to "share our adventures with a wide-eyed little person."

In a People magazine story out Friday, Wolfe discussed why the couple decided to share news of their pregnancy and relationship. As Wolfe put it: "I don't want to bring my daughter into a world where I'm not comfortable telling everyone who I am and who her mother is."

Other TV journalists who have come out as gay include Anderson Cooper of CNN, Sam Champion of ABC and CNN's Don Lemon.

Woman's big breasts are no big deal to boyfriend

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: Before we met, my girlfriend got large breast implants. I think they're a terrible turn-off, but I don't know how to tell her. Should I try to overlook this because I love her, or can I tell her the truth about why our love life is sometimes not so hot? I have known her long enough that the next step is marriage—or nothing.

She walks around the house bare-chested and obviously thinks I find her breasts a big turn-on. I have faked it for five years. What should I do?

NOT THAT EXCITED IN COLORADO

DEAR NOT THAT EXCITED: Your letter is a lesson about the danger of "faking it." Level with your girlfriend, but without using the words "terrible" and "turn-off." Tell her you love her, but while many men find large breasts to be a turn-on, you actually prefer smaller ones—to the degree that it sometimes affects your sexual performance.

Explain that if she thinks her breasts are what have kept you interested, it's not the case. At some point, one or more of her implants may need to be replaced, and she might opt for smaller ones.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I moved to Australia 10 years ago. It has been a fantastic adventure, but I feel drawn home. Complicating things is the fact that I have a same-sex Australian partner. Because gay marriage is not federally recognized in the United States, he has no possibility of legally emigrating there. His skills are not sufficient.

To move back to the U.S. would destroy my home, which is a happy one. On the other hand, I come from a large, close family and my parents are entering their 70s. I miss my family and my culture every day, and feel torn between my family in the U.S. and my partner in Australia.

I have felt this way for a few years. I feel unable to settle down and start living or feel comfortable in my life until I work this out. The thought of not being around my family in the long term is unbearable. The thought of leaving my partner is equally painful. I have tried in vain to find an answer and feel overwhelmed. Help!

TRANS-PACIFIC READER

DEAR TRANS-PACIFIC: I don't know your financial situation, but why must this be an "either/or" situation? You're happily settled in a beautiful country and enjoying a loving relationship. I assume you also have a well-paying job.

Your dilemma might be solved by visiting your parents more often, particularly since their health is still good. If that changes, you could return to the U.S. for a more extended period. Until the laws in the U.S. regarding same-sex marriage change, that's what you will have to do unless you're willing to sacrifice your relationship.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Is it proper to tip your tattoo artist or piercer? They provide a service, just as a hairdresser would. I have never seen this addressed before. Your input would be helpful.

CURIOUS IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

DEAR CURIOUS: Tattoos and piercings are considered works of art, and it's not unusual for a customer to present the artist with a gratuity commensurate with the degree of satisfaction the person feels with the results, the time it took to create it and the intricacy of the design. In lieu of money, sometimes gifts such as art books, spiritual artifacts or jewelry are given to the artist.

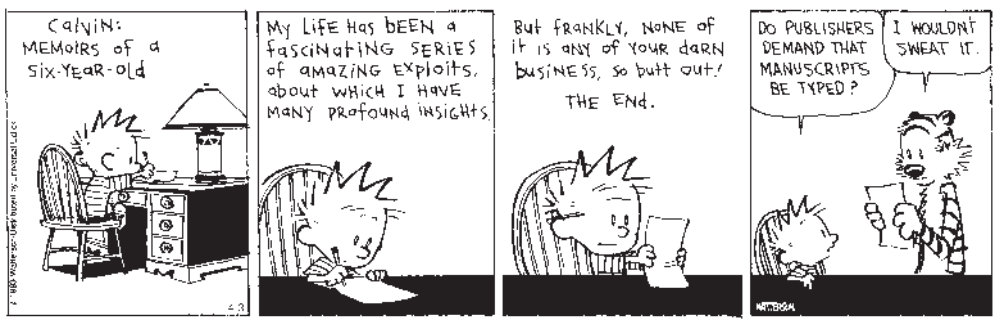
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


Calvin: MEMOIRS of a Six-YEAR-old
My LIFE HAS BEEN a fascinating SERIES of amazing exploits, about WHICH I HAVE MANY profound INSIGHTS.
But FRANKLY, NONE of it IS ANY of YOUR darn business, so butt out! THE END.
DO PUBLISHERS DEMAND THAT MANUSCRIPTS BE TYPED?
I WOULDN'T SWEAT IT.

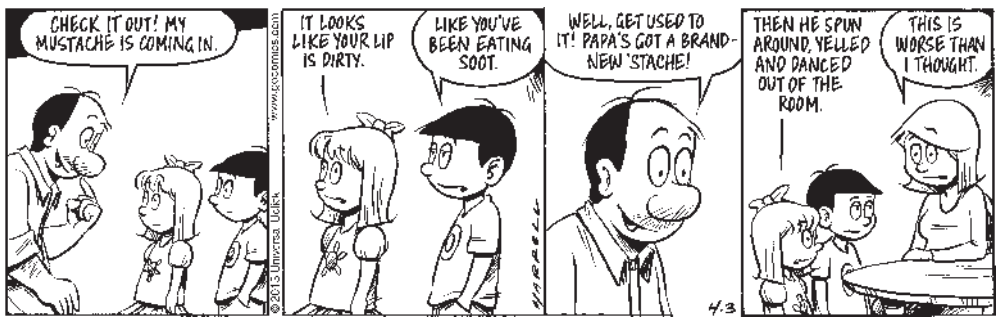
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

YOU CATS ARE SPOOKY, GARFIELD
SOME SAY YOU CAN READ MINDS
WELL, NOT WITH MY BRAIN-WAVE-BLOCKING HELMET, BUDDY BOY!
NOW FOR MY ESCAPE...
JIM DAVIS 4-3

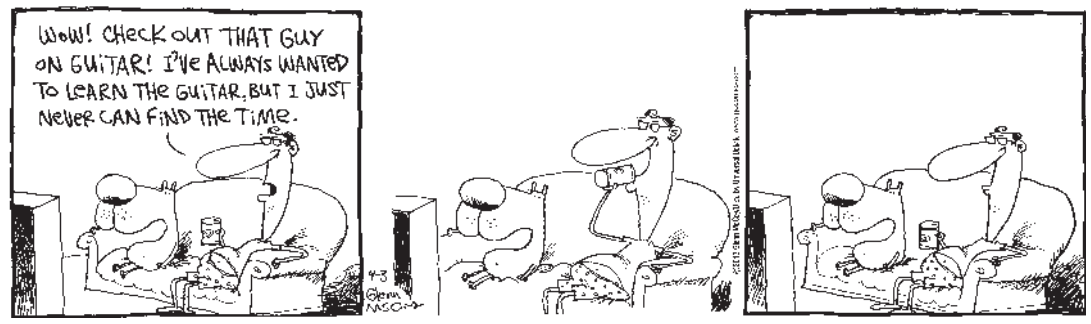
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


CHECK IT OUT! MY MUSTACHE IS COMING IN.
IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR LIP IS DIRTY.
LIKE YOU'VE BEEN EATING SOOT.
WELL, GET USED TO IT! PAPA'S GOT A BRAND-NEW 'STACHE!
THEN HE SPUN AROUND, YELLED AND DANCED OUT OF THE ROOM.
THIS IS WORSE THAN I THOUGHT.
4.3

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

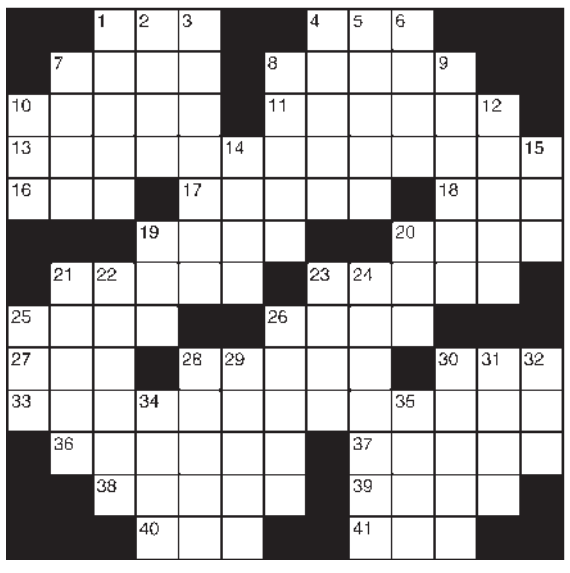
ACROSS
1 Taxi
4 A-E connection
7 Showroom sample
8 Sag
10 Sound portion
11 Peter of Peter, Paul and Mary
13 Fairy tale footwear
16 "— the ramparts ..."
17 Frogs' kin
18 Also
19 Flowerless plant
20 Perches
21 Worship
23 Nothing
25 Elbow counterpart
26 Hardly brawny
27 And so on (Abbr.)
28 Liniment targets
30 Second person
33 Lawn-trimming tools
36 Blazing
37 Cheer up
38 Cobbler's supply
39 A rate or tax
40 Type squares
41 Tit for —

DOWN
1 Fragrant wood
2 Writer Kingsley
3 Rocket stage
4 Make pigtails
5 Military group
6 Dutch village
7 "Psych" actor Hill
8 "The Times They Are A-Changin'" singer
9 Beautifully imaginative
10 Way back when
12 Very angry
14 Peeved
15 "Help!"
19 Adversary
20 Crafty
21 Bone cavities
22 Coffee shop orders
23 New Mexico tribe
24 Scrutinize
25 Small barrel
26 Heaps
28 Song of David
29 Pinnacles
30 Leavening agent
31 Table scraps
32 Employ
34 — gin fizz
35 Entreaty

Solution time: 21 mins.

M	A	G	S	■	V	A	T	■	O	B	I	T
E	R	I	C	■	A	L	E	■	N	E	R	O
S	E	G	A	■	L	O	N	G	H	A	I	R
H	A	I	R	C	U	T	■	R	O	U	S	E
■	■	■	A	G	E	■	O	I	L	■	■	■
R	A	B	B	I	■	C	U	T	D	O	W	N
E	G	O	■	■	J	O	I	■	■	P	E	A
D	O	W	N	L	O	W	■	P	U	T	T	Y
■	■	■	E	O	N	■	T	O	N	■	■	■
G	R	O	W	L	■	L	O	W	L	I	F	E
L	I	F	E	L	O	N	G	■	E	D	I	T
E	V	I	L	■	A	D	A	■	S	E	R	A
N	F	T	S	■	F	G	S	■	S	A	S	S

Yesterday's answer 4-3



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18– only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Cobie Smulders, 31; Adam Scott, 40; Eddie Murphy, 52; Alec Baldwin, 55

Happy Birthday: Don't limit what you can do. Work quietly on your own to avoid interference from others. Separate your personal and professional lives to avoid getting involved in gossip. Explore avenues that will enhance your knowledge and your experience. Give old ideas a new twist and you will have something worth promoting. Don't be afraid to alter your course. Your numbers are 5, 13, 18, 20, 27, 34, 48.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't give in to poor behavior. Do your best, but don't compensate for someone else's shortcomings. You may need to make personal or professional changes to avoid being taken advantage of or treated poorly. Put your needs first. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Take an interest in what others are doing and pitch in and help. Taking part will bring you an opportunity to use your skills in a unique way. Don't allow a secret to stunt your personal or professional growth. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Financial assistance will be limited, but putting your plans into motion and connecting with people who can pave the way to your success is likely if you network and set up meetings. Love will flourish, but overspending will lead to emotional problems. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Go over every last detail carefully. There will be no room for error. Emotions will be difficult to control, and taking a serious approach to any relationships you are involved in personally or professionally will be necessary. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Welcome any challenge that allows you to show off your skills, talent or expertise. A lifestyle change will perk you up and expand the possibilities for future friendships. Love is in the stars, but jealousy can hinder the outcome. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Gravitate toward serious-minded people with similar goals. Shy away from unstable investments or unpredictable individuals trying to sell you something enticing but not necessary. Collaborate with trusted colleagues or personal partners. Take good care of your health. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Look at the big picture and expand your interests. Connect with people who have knowledge or skills you would like to learn. Partnerships appear unstable, and a power struggle must be handled diplomatically. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Listen to what's being revealed. Your ability to read between the lines will help you make good personal choices. A creative challenge must be embraced and dealt with passionately and with enthusiasm. An emotional matter mustn't be treated impulsively. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Make your home environment more conducive to what you like to do personally and professionally. Having a space that encourages you to develop ideas will also enhance your relationships with others. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Difficulties while traveling or dealing with friends, peers or people in your community can be expected. Don't let confusion set in based on someone's unpredictability. Set your course and stick to it regardless of what others do or say. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Spend time improving your personal situation. Rely on old friends and readdress plans you shelved or didn't have time to pursue. Getting together with people you lost touch with will give you a new lease on life. Embrace change and romance. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Assist people you feel have something to offer in return. You can stabilize your financial future if you take precautions now with regard to investments and contracts. Negotiate your position with a long-term mentality instead of instant gratification and you will benefit. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are charming, outgoing, sensitive and able to see possibilities others cannot.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		6	5					
	9		1					
4				9				5
6	7	2			8	4	9	
		5						8
		3						2
		7	9	4	5	2	8	3
		9		7		5		6
		4		6		1		9

Difficulty Level ★★★ 4/03

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

9	5	6	1	8	2	3	7	4
8	4	1	7	3	5	2	6	9
3	7	2	6	4	9	8	5	1
1	8	3	2	7	4	5	9	6
4	2	5	9	6	1	7	8	3
7	6	9	3	5	8	4	1	2
2	9	4	8	1	7	6	3	5
5	3	7	4	9	6	1	2	8
6	1	8	5	2	3	9	4	7

Difficulty Level ★★ 4/02

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

MAYOR ED KOCH (1924-2013) Solution: 9 letters

C	C	C	R	I	T	I	C	B	A	W	R	P	X	A
O	O	A	A	H	O	U	S	E	R	G	E	A	N	T
N	M	M	R	K	L	A	W	Y	E	R	V	E	O	T
G	B	P	M	B	R	A	E	A	M	R	I	F	R	O
R	A	A	Y	E	I	O	R	D	I	O	E	I	B	R
E	T	I	M	I	N	T	Y	E	W	D	W	L	A	N
S	S	G	A	D	E	T	R	W	B	A	E	L	C	E
S	T	N	Y	D	G	A	A	A	E	I	R	M	H	Y
I	A	A	O	E	D	W	I	T	T	N	L	D	E	T
U	T	M	R	I	U	I	D	E	O	O	O	E	L	S
O	E	A	O	S	J	N	T	R	I	R	R	T	O	I
L	Ⓢ	Ⓔ	Ⓐ	Ⓣ	A	S	N	M	U	L	O	C	R	E
E	Y	T	I	L	A	E	R	S	V	O	T	E	S	F
A	C	A	O	R	E	L	Y	R	A	T	I	L	I	M
D	L	P	S	E	I	V	O	M	U	P	P	E	T	S

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Yesterday's Answer: Chocolate

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Harper's homers, Newtown salute mark opening day

WASHINGTON (AP)—Bryce Harper homered in his first two at-bats, Stephen Strasburg retired 19 batters in a row at one stretch, and the defending NL East champion Washington Nationals opened the season with a 2-0 victory over the Miami Marlins on Monday.

Reigning NL Rookie of the Year Harper, a 20-year-old outfielder, hit solo shots over the out-of-town scoreboard in right-center field off Ricky Nolasco in the first and fourth innings.

New closer Rafael Soriano got the save.

"You just shake your head in amazement. You don't see that too often from anybody, period. But to see him as a 20-year-old? He's just writing a book right now," new Nationals center fielder Denard Span said. "And he does it so calm, too."

It was Harper's first taste of a season's start in the big leagues; he began last year in the minors before getting called up later in April.

"Pretty special moment," Harper said. "If I was 0 for 4, or 4 for 4, it wouldn't have mattered to me. Just going out there having some fun on opening day for the first time."

He's nothing if not exuberant, and Johnson joked afterward that Harper's dugout high-fives after homer No. 1 really hurt some palms.

"I'm glad he cut it down on the second one," Johnson said, smiling. "I was still stinging from the first one. I think a lot of people were."

For the 24-year-old Strasburg (1-0), this marked the start of what should be his first full season in the majors, with zero pitch or inning limits. Shut down before the stretch run in September in 2012, he was dominant against a trade-depleted Marlins lineup that features Giancarlo Stanton and little else.

The right-hander went seven innings, matching his career high, allowing three hits.

Asked if he could have pitched longer, Strasburg said: "If it wasn't opening day and the first start of the year, it would have been a different story."

Pitching to contact more than in the past, Strasburg had three strikeouts, zero walks - and needed only 80 pitches.

Meanwhile, players, managers, coaches, umpires and everyone else in uniform wore patches in tribute to those killed last December in the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn.

AP

Washington Nationals left fielder Bryce Harper (34) congratulates his teammates after the Nationals 2-0 victory over the Miami Marlins in the opening day baseball game in Washington, on Monday, April 1, 2013.

Dodgers 4, Giants 0

In Los Angeles, Clayton Kershaw launched his first career home run to break a scoreless tie in the eighth inning, then finished off a four-hitter that led the Los Angeles Dodgers past the San Francisco Giants.

Kershaw became the first pitcher to throw a shutout and hit a home run in an opener since Bob Lemon for Cleveland in 1953, STATS said.

Mets 11, Padres 2

In New York, Jonathon Niese stepped nicely into his new role as No. 1 starter for the Mets, and Collin Cowgill capped a successful New York debut with a grand slam in a rout of the San Diego Padres.

Handed the opening day assignment in place of injured Johan Santana, Niese enjoyed a big afternoon with both his arm and bat. He breezed into the seventh inning against a Padres lineup missing slugger Chase Headley (broken thumb) and catcher Yasmani Grandal, suspended for the first 50 games after testing positive for testosterone.

Cubs 3, Pirates 1

In Pittsburgh, Jeff Samardzija struck out nine in eight nearly flawless innings and the Chicago Cubs held on for a victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates.

The right-hander allowed just two hits and walked one as the Chicago won on opening day for the first time since 2009. Anthony Rizzo hit a two-run homer and Wellington Castillo added an RBI double for the Cubs.

Brewers 5, Rockies 4, 10 innings

In Milwaukee, Jonathan Lucroy hit a sacrifice fly in the 10th inning to give the Milwaukee Brewers a victory over Colorado, ruining the first game for new Rockies manager Walt Weiss.

Rickie Weeks sparked the winning rally when he stole second after he was hit by a pitch with one out. Adam Ottavino then issued an intentional walk to Ryan Braun and lost Aramis Ramirez to another walk before Lucroy ended the game with a fly ball to center field.

Braves 7, Phillies 5

In Atlanta, Freddie Freeman drove in three runs with three hits, including the first of three Atlanta home runs, and the Braves beat Cole Hamels and the Philadelphia Phillies.

Dan Uggla and Justin Upton, making his Braves debut, also homered for Atlanta, which led National League teams with 49 in spring training.

Hamels (0-1) struggled in his first opening day start. He gave up five runs on seven hits, including the three homers, with five strikeouts and one walk in five innings.

Diamondbacks 6, Cardinals 2

In Phoenix, Ian Kennedy struck out eight in seven strong innings and the Arizona Diamondbacks used 15 hits to beat the St. Louis Cardinals.

Kennedy (1-0) allowed two runs on five hits with one walk. St. Louis' Adam Wainwright (0-1) went six innings, giving up four runs, three earned, on 11 hits. He struck out six with no walks.

Arizona's Gerardo Parra matched his career best with four hits, three of them doubles.

Angels 3, Reds 1, 13 innings

In Cincinnati, Chris Iannetta hit a solo homer early in the game and a bases-loaded single in the 13th inning, powering the Los Angeles Angels past the Cincinnati Reds in the majors' first interleague season opener.

The Angels loaded the bases with two outs in the 13th off J.J. Hoover, who walked two and hit Hank Conger, the Angels' final position player. Iannetta worked the count full, fouled off a pair of pitches, then singled to left.

Tigers 4, Twins 2

In Minneapolis, Justin Verlander won on opening day for the first time in six tries, pitching five shutout innings at frosty Target Field and sending the defending American League champion Detroit Tigers past the Minnesota Twins 4-2 on Monday.

With the gametime temperature at 35 degrees and the wind blowing at 17 mph, fans had to bundle up. But opening day is always a draw, as evidenced by the announced sellout crowd of 38,282.

Verlander (1-0) had been 0-1 in his previous five openers. Phil Coke got the last two outs for the first save by the Tigers' closer committee.

Red Sox 8, Yankees 2

In New York, Jon Lester and the Boston Red Sox got off to a quick start after a dreadful 2012 season, giving new manager John Farrell an opening day win over the depleted New York Yankees.

Newcomer Shane Victorino led a revamped Red Sox lineup with three RBIs and rookie Jackie Bradley Jr. walked three times and scored twice in his big league debut. Boston's big day against CC Sabathia (0-1) came a year after it lost its first three games under Bobby Valentine and went on to a 69-93 finish.

White Sox 1, Royals 0

In Chicago, Chris Sale outpitched James Shields, Tyler Flowers homered and the Chicago White Sox beat Kansas City in their season opener.

Sale (1-0) showed the form that made him a 17-game winner and an All-Star in his first season as a starter. On a chilly day when the gametime temperature was 44, he allowed seven hits and struck out seven in 7 2-3 innings. Addison Reed worked the ninth for the save.

Mariners 2, Athletics 0

In Oakland, Felix Hernandez struck out eight on opening day in his first start since signing a $175 million, seven-year contract in February, and the Mariners beat the reigning AL West champion Oakland Athletics.

King Felix surrendered one walk while pitching 7 2-3 scoreless innings. He didn't allow a hit until John Jaso doubled to left-center with one out in the fourth, only a couple of hours after the pitcher gifted his former backstop with a Rolex watch for catching his perfect game in August against the Rays.

Yankees set record payroll at $230M; Astros $27M

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Yankees set a record for baseball's highest opening-day payroll at $230.4 million, almost 10 times what the Houston Astros are paying their players.

After all the talk of spending restraint during the offseason, the Yankees began the season Monday well ahead of the Los Angeles Dodgers, according to a study of big league contracts by The Associated Press.

"We're the Yankees. We've had a lot of success doing business the way that we do it," Yankees first baseman Mark Teixeira said. "Why would you change?"

The Dodgers at $214.8 million became only the second franchise to break the $200 million barrier. The Yankees have topped it six years in a row.

"It doesn't take the highest payroll to win," Dodgers President Stan Kasten said. "You can't win by writing the biggest paycheck. I don't talk about our payroll. I talk about our players. We won't always have to sign the biggest free agents and make the biggest trades to be the best team."

At the other end, Houston was last at $27.3 million, down from about $61 million opening day last year and less than the major league-leading $29 million for the Yankees' Alex Rodriguez. Houston's payroll is the lowest since the 2008 Florida Marlins were at $22 million.

Starting their first season in the American League, the Astros have lost 213 games during the past two years.

After an unsuccessful first season in their new ballpark and an offseason spent shedding stars, the Miami Marlins dropped from about $90 million to 29th at $44.7 million.

Fourteen teams topped $100 million, up from eight at the start of last season. Philadelphia was third at $160 million, followed by Boston ($157.6 million), AL champion Detroit ($150.5 million), the Los Angeles Angels ($141.9 million) and World Series champion San Francisco ($138 million).

Toronto was another team that changed its approach during the offseason, raising its payroll from $75 million to $118 million.

The average for the 856 players on active rosters and disabled lists plus the four players serving suspensions was $3.65 million, up 6.1 percent from $3.44 million at the start of last season and the steepest rise since 2008.

Million-dollar salaries rose by 15 to 463, which comes to 54 percent of players. The number of $10 million players increased from 89 to 103, and $20 million stars jumped from 14 to 21.

Just 44 players make the $490,000 minimum. The median salary, the point at which an equal number is above and below, rose by $187,500 to a record $1,262,500.

There were 102 players on disabled lists, one fewer than on opening day last year.

Jazz beat Blazers, stay in playoff race

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Al Jefferson scored 24 points, Mo Williams hit six 3-pointers and the Utah Jazz beat the Portland Trail Blazers 112-102 Monday night to extend their winning streak to a season-best five games.

The win was Utah's second in four days over the Blazers (33-41), losers of five consecutive.

Wesley Matthews scored 23 for Portland, still without leading scorer LaMarcus Aldridge because of a sprained ankle.

Rookie standout Damian Lillard added 17 points, including three 3-pointers to break the NBA's single-season rookie record (166) for 3s.

Utah moved a half-game ahead of the idle Los Angeles Lakers for the eighth Western Conference playoff spot, and two games ahead of Dallas.

The Blazers were within 79-72 after Eric Maynor's 3-pointer with 2:02 left in the third before Williams hit his fifth and sixth 3-pointers to give Utah an 87-74 lead going into the fourth

Utah outscored Portland 52-28 in the paint. The Jazz opened the fourth on a 10-4 run, and never looked back.

Randy Foye did the damage in Saturday's win over Brooklyn, going 8 of 9 on 3-pointers.

On Monday, it was Williams' turn.

He was a season-high 6 of 7 and finished with 20 points as six Jazz players scored in double figures.

Jefferson made 12 of 21 shots, had 10 rebounds, two steals and two blocks. Derrick Favors added 18 points and seven rebounds.

Lillard, the No. 6 overall pick in the June draft, had averaged 24.3 points in three previous games against Utah this season. And he was playing in a homecoming of sorts, having played just 40 miles north of Salt Lake City at Weber State.

But Williams made sure the rookie couldn't match him.

In Portland on Friday, Williams scored 26 of his 28 points in the second half. He was 3 of 3 from beyond the arc in the third Monday as Utah pulled away.

AP

Portland Trail Blazers' Joel Freeland, rear, fouls Utah Jazz's Randy Foye, center, as he goes to the basket as Trail Blazers' Damian Lillard (0) watches in the first quarter during an NBA basketball game Monday, April 1, 2013, in Salt Lake City.

Pacers 109, Clippers, 106

In Los Angeles, Roy Hibbert had 26 points and 10 rebounds before fouling out, Paul George added 23 points and 10 assists, and the Indiana Pacers barely completed a sweep of their four-game road trip with a 109-106 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Monday night in a battle of division leaders.

Hibbert, who was serving a one-game suspension from the league when the Pacers lost to the Clippers 99-91 at Indianapolis on Feb. 28, made all eight of his shots in the first half and finished 11 for 14 from the field to help his team extend its winning streak to five and increase its Central Division lead to 6 1/2 games over idle Chicago.

All five Pacers starters scored in double figures, with David West getting 16 and backcourt mates Lance Stephenson and George Hill chipping in with 13 apiece.

Bucks 131, Bobcats 102

In Milwaukee, Larry Sanders had a career-high 24 points and 13 rebounds as Milwaukee cruised to a 131-102 victory over the Charlotte Bobcats on Monday night for the Bucks' highest scoring total in more than four years.

Monta Ellis had 19 points, a career-high 14 assists and six steals to help Milwaukee pull 1 1/2 games behind seventh-place Boston in the Eastern Conference playoff race. The Celtics lost to Minnesota on Monday.

Ersan Ilyasova added 22 points for the Bucks, J.J. Redick scored 20, and Brandon Jennings 19. Milwaukee, which had lost five of six, remained solidly in the eighth position in the East, with a six-game lead over idle Philadelphia.

Rockets 111, Magic 103

In Houston, Omer Asik matched his career high with 22 points and grabbed 18 rebounds, and the Houston Rockets beat the Orlando Magic 111-103 on Monday night without James Harden and Chandler Parsons.

Jeremy Lin had 19 points and 11 assists, and Francisco Garcia had 14 points, five assists and three blocks for the Rockets, who hardly missed their top two scorers until Orlando made a late run. Harden sat out for the second straight game with a sore right foot and Parsons missed the game with an illness.

Rookie Maurice Harkless scored a career-high 28 points and Beno Udrih had 17 points and 10 assists for the Magic.

Hawks 102, Cavaliers 94

In Atlanta, Devin Harris scored a season-high 25 points and Josh Smith nearly added a triple-double Monday night as the Atlanta Hawks beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 102-94 to improve their chances of securing home-court advantage in the first round of the playoffs.

Smith had 18 points, 14 rebounds and eight assists before a sparse crowd in Philips Arena to help the Hawks (42-33) pull within one game of Brooklyn (42-31) for fourth place in the Eastern Conference.

Reserve Marreese Speights scored 14 of his 22 in the final quarter, but the Cavs (22-51) did not seriously threaten after pulling within 58-56 early in the third period.

Timberwoles 110, Celtics 100

In Minneapolis, Nikola Pekovic bruised and battered the overmatched Boston front line for 29 points to lead the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 110-100 victory over the Celtics on Monday night.

Andrei Kirilenko had 17 points, nine rebounds and five assists, and Dante Cunningham scored 19 points off the bench for the Wolves, who delivered coach Rick Adelman his 998th career victory.

Avery Bradley scored 19 points for Boston, which was playing without Paul Pierce and Kevin Garnett. The Celtics, who started the day 2 1/2 games ahead of eight-seeded Milwaukee in the Eastern Conference playoff race, have lost seven of their last nine games.

This one snapped an 11-game winning streak against the Wolves, who beat Boston for the first time since Garnett was traded there in 2007.

Grizzlies 92, Spurs 90

In Memphis, Mike Conley drove for a layup with 0.6 seconds left, and the Memphis Grizzlies rallied to beat the San Antonio Spurs 92-90 Monday night for their third straight victory.

The Grizzlies matched their franchise record with their 50th win this season, and they won their 12th straight at home. They pulled out a win in a game where Conley's bucket gave them their first lead since 18-16 late in the first quarter.

Conley scored the final five points and finished with 23. Jerryd Bayless had 17 points, Marc Gasol 16, Zach Randolph 11 points and 10 rebounds, and Tayshaun Prince had 11 points.

Tony Parker had 25 points for the Spurs. Parker tried to beat the buzzer with a jumper that was too late.

Pistons 108, Raptors 98

In Toronto, a big effort from Detroit's bench ensured a happy ending to Jose Calderon's homecoming party.

Greg Monroe scored 24 points, Calderon had 19 points and nine assists against his former team, and the Pistons snapped a three-game losing streak by beating the Toronto Raptors 108-98 on Monday night.

Rodney Stuckey scored 18 points, Jonas Jerebko had 15 and rookie Khris Middleton added 11 as the Pistons won for just the third time in 19 games.

Stuckey, Jerebko and Middleton combined for 29 of Detroit's 33 fourth-quarter points.

"That fourth quarter group was tremendous," Pistons coach Lawrence Frank said. "Great ball movement, really good spacing, very unselfish basketball. Each of those guys really, really impacted the game."

Louisville the 'sure thing' in a season of parity

ATLANTA (AP)—The word of the season: Parity.

The team of the moment: Louisville.

For a college basketball season in which it seemed anybody could beat anybody, and the No. 1 ranking was never secure, Rick Pitino's Cardinals have certainly cemented themselves as a prohibitive front-runner now that there are only four teams left. They head to Atlanta listed as 3-5 favorites in Las Vegas, after dispatching everyone from Duke to North Carolina A&T with equal ease on their way to the Final Four.

Trying to stop them will be Michigan, Syracuse and Wichita State - a pair of No. 4 seeds and a No. 9, all serving as great examples of how difficult it was to sort out the contenders from the pretenders heading into the 2013 version of March Madness.

"Cinderella found one glass skipper," said Gregg Marshall, coach of Wichita State, which beat No. 1-seeded Gonzaga and No. 2 Ohio State on its way to adding some mid-major mojo to the Final Four. "We won four games. I don't think she found four glass slippers. When you get to this point, you're good enough to win it all."

Pitino said he does, in fact, believe in parity during this, a season in which the team at the top of The Associated Press poll changed five times in five straight weeks at one point.

He called the Midwest Region, where the Cardinals were seeded first and won their games by an average of nearly 22 points, "the death bracket."

"I've experienced quite a few NCAAs," said Pitino, who is coaching his seventh Final Four team. "I've never played the likes of a Colorado State in the second round. They're a team that was very much capable of getting to a Final Four. Then Oregon was just absolutely terrific. Then certainly Coach K and Duke ... To play Duke in an Elite Eight, never mind a Final Four, it was a death bracket."

But fueled by emotion after teammate Kevin Ware gruesomely broke his leg, the Cardinals (33-5) beat Duke by 22 points, the second-most lopsided loss of the season for coach Mike Krzyzewski's team.

The Michigan-Syracuse semifinal features two power-conference teams that finished in the upper half of their leagues, but stayed under the radar through conference tournament time.

The Orangemen (30-9) headed into the season having lost four players from a team that was seeded first last year but came up a win short of the Final Four.

They headed into the postseason losing four of five and coach Jim Boeheim was talking more about playing golf than coaching in April.

Sparked by Boeheim's vaunted 2-3 zone defense, they started playing better when they headed to New York for the Big East tournament. Led by Michael Carter-Williams, they've won seven of eight (their only loss was to Louisville in the Big East final) and are back in the Final Four for the first time since Carmelo Anthony brought the championship home in 2003.

"It's difficult when you lose four out of five games," Boeheim said of a streak that knocked Syracuse to the middle of the pack in the Big East and affected their NCAA seeding, as well. "But people go through that. Duke lost three games in a row this year. Kansas did. Michigan had a bad stretch. I think most teams have a bad stretch sometime during the course of the year, particularly if you play four games against three teams in the top 15 in the country."

Michigan's lull came in early February, when it lost three of four shortly after reaching No. 1 in the AP poll for the first time since 1992—the days of the Fab Five.

Its current four-game winning streak is the first of more than two games since early in the Big Ten season. So, while the No. 4 seed may make sense for the Wolverines (30-7), it may not account for the difference maker they have in All-American Trey Burke. Burke has averaged 18.6 points in the last three games of the tournament, and made a critical long 3-pointer in an unlikely comeback victory over Kansas in the regional semifinals.

Coach John Beilein's job will be to find ways to get shots for Burke against Boeheim's zone.

Kyodai, Naughty Boyz atop SEDA Thursday B

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Docomo-Na'Gupu of Naked Fish players pose for a group photo after joining the Naughty Boyz in the winners' circle in the SEDA league last week.

Jonny's Bar & Grill's Kyodai and SOS Bar & Grill's Naughty Boyz are the current frontrunners in the Saipan Electronic Dart Association's B-Flame Tree and B-Fanihi divisions.

Kyodai ran over the division bottomfeeder Refalauans (18-72) of Sand's Juvy Restaurant, 13-2, at home to improve its record to 64-26. It holds a five-game lead over Joe's Steakhouse's Skorgazzums (59-31) which endured a 7-8 road upset to The Waterfront's Dart Balas (50-40).

Joe's Steakhouse's Skorgazzums moved into third position with the win, just one game in front of Naked Fish Bar & Grill's Oneshot (49-41), which handled Team Exotic (45-45), 9-6, at home last week.

Season notables include a 160 high-in by Oneshot's Scott Guerrero and a 110 high-out by Team Exotic's Jordan Mendiola. Team Exotic's Kevin Ada is currently ranked first in the B-Flame Tree individual statistics with a weighted average of 52.73. He is averaging 15.74 points per dart (PPD) through five games and 3.36 marks per round (MPR) through eight games thus far.

In the Fanihi division, the Naughty Boyz notched a nice 9-6 road win over Welebwu Shots (43-47) at Bammy's Restaurant & Bar to improve to a 56-34 record. The division leader is gripping a three-game edge against NTT Docomo Pacific's Na'Gupu (53-37) and SOS's Zyndicato (53-37).

In other results, Docomo-Na'Gupu of Naked Fish made it past the Jr. Destroyers (36-54), 8-7, at Jokers Bar & Restaurant, while Zyndicato also won over Sand's D'Parekoys (35-55), 8-7. Sand's No Fear (45-45) downed Jokers' Red Horse Buddies (39-51), 9-6, at home.

Notables include a 160 high-in by No Fear's Frances Magofna and a 119 high-out by Docomo-Na'Gupu's Jeff Babauta.

Naughty Boyz's Justin Mizutani is currently ranked first place in the B-Fanihi individual statistics with a WA of 57.35. He is averaging 19.13 PPD through four games and 3.47 MPR through eight matchups to date.

Meanwhile, official scoring results of the final matchup between sixth-ranked Joe's Dutty Gunz (34-41) and No. 7 Taya Guaha (26-49), of Oceanside Bar & Grill were not received.

Meanwhile, action in the SEDA league will resume this week. Thursday's Flame Tree pairings include Red Horse Buddies hosting the Jr. Destroyers; the Naughty Boyz waving in No Fear; D'Parekoys setting up for Welebwu Shots; and Docomo'Na'Gupu hailing over Zyndicato.

The B-Fanihi matchups list the Skorgazzums welcoming the Dutty Gunz; Team Exotic hosting Dart Balas; the Rafalauans calling over Oneshot; and Taya Guaha preparing for Kyodai.

For more information about the league, visit www.pacificamusement.com/seda or visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/seda.saipan.

13 CNMI

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Villanueva, and Dylan Ackerman. The Commonwealth's No. 1 U18 player Thea Minor tops the girls division, which also includes Mikayla Lopez, Negahr Rastguiy, Melody Johnson, and the returning Tammy Ackerman, who has been based in Fiji for the past two years, training in the Oceania Tennis Federation facility.

Of the 13 Commonwealth players, only Jones, Lopez, Rastguiy, Minor, and Ackerman have experience competing in Junior ITF events. The four CNMI players joined a Junior ITF tournament in Fiji last year and Minor, Jones, and Ackerman also participated in similar ranking events either in Australia or New Zealand a couple of years ago.

In the CNMI-hosted Junior ITF event, the host's bets will be competing against players from the U.S. mainland, Thailand, Hong Kong, Indonesia, India, Australia, Great Britain, Russia, Lithuania, Kazakhstan, Japan, Germany, the Philippines, China, Portugal, and Switzerland.

"Many of the players coming here already have ITF Junior world rankings. This will be the highest level tennis competition in the CNMI history," Race said.

"We don't know yet who will go in the main and qualifying draws until the registration closes," he added.

Sign-up ends on April 23 and only 16 players (in each division) will be allowed to play in the qualifying draw and 32 in the main draw. The doubles competition will have a 16-team draw.

Of the off-island players competing in next month's tournament, India and Korea have the most in the boys division with eight each. Thailand has four, while China, the U.S., Australia, and Germany have two apiece, and Hong Kong, Portugal, Indonesia, the Philippines, Lithuania, Kazakhstan and Great Britain have one each. In the girls division, Russia is bringing in four, while the Philippines is fielding three. Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand, the U.S., and Indonesia have two each, while Australia, Germany, and Switzerland have one apiece.

Thirty ranking points will go to the winner (singles) of the Junior ITF Circuit's Grade 5 tournament, 20 to runner-up, 15 to the semifinalists, 10 to the quarterfinalists, and 5 to the losers in the Round of 16.

Meanwhile, NMITA would like to thank the following for supporting the biggest tennis tournament in the CNMI: IT&E, Pacific Islands Club-Saipan, Kanoa Resort, August Health Care, and Triple J Motors.

GO KART

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Fund. For $20, food vendors will also be able to join the 1st Annual Angus Beef BBQ Sandwich Contest, which will award $200 for 1st place, $100 for 2nd place, and $50 for 3rd place.

To register as a food vendor, contact Takahiro Omori at omori@marianaresort.com or William Retardo at william.retardo@marianaresort.com or call Mariana Resort & Spa at 1.670.322.0770.

The event will also feature the 1st Annual Delta Fly Away Raffle for a chance to win a round trip ticket to any Delta Air Lines destination. Raffle tickets will be sold at the grounds for only $1.

Teams of four racers (three men and one woman) and a pit manager can still register for $250/team. A valid driver's license is required. The team captain must also attend a mandatory orientation meeting on April 5.

On race day, the track will be open for practice at 8:30am, with the opening ceremony scheduled for 10am. In a single-elimination format, the first qualifying round will begin at 10:30am, followed by consolation matches and then the second qualifying round. The final round will pit the Top 4 teams against each other.

For race registration forms or to become a race sponsor, contact Lito Pardulan at lito.pardan@marianaresort.com or 989.1956, or contact Mamoru Watanabe at watanabe@tasitours.com or 1.60.287.7143.

This year's sponsors also include Mobil, DFS Galleria, Triple J Five Start Wholesale Foods, Coca-Cola, Foremost, Japan Saipan Travel Association, and Tasi Tours. ***(PR)***

CLOSE

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the best time in the boys group with his 11.46 seconds. Dylan's schoolmates Soleil Lamar (11.09 seconds) and Anthony Gregoire (12.85 seconds) took the second spots.

The Top 2 finishers (60m, 100m, 200m) in each zone will automatically qualify for the All Schools Championships, while the rest of the times from all zones will be compiled with the Top 2 getting the last two tickets for the May 8 to 10 competition.

In the girls U10 division, Whispering Palms nailed the Top 2 spots with Shea Hartig and Jinju Thompson timing in at 10.16 seconds and 10.78 seconds, respectively. There were no entries in the boys division.

In the girls U12, Whispering Palms also had a 1-2 finish with Gillian Villagomez clocking in at 9.54 seconds and Amber Montenegro submitting 9.84 seconds. Oleai had a sweep, too, in the boys division with Travis Galang recording 9.49 seconds and beating teammate Hunter Wabol (10.13 seconds).

In the girls U8 100m trials, Oleai had another sweep with Nepaial crossing the finish line at the 18.21-second mark, about one second ahead of teammate Audrey Castro (19.25 seconds). Brilliant Star duplicated Oleai's 1-2 finish with Mister clocking in at 19.14 seconds and Richie Castro logging 19.21 seconds.

Hartig was the lone entry in the girls U10 division of the 100m race and tallied 17.02 seocnds, while fellow Whispering Palms bets—Villagomez (15.72 seconds) and Montenegro (16.58 seconds) joined the girls U12 qualifier. In the boys U12, Oleai's Galang (15.73 seconds) prevailed over schoolmate Wabol (15.79 seconds) and Whispering Palms' Steven Goodwin (17.04 seconds).

After falling short in her first two events, Oleai's Kina Rangamar finally topped the 200m race for the girls U8 age group, recording 44.37 seconds and beating Brilliant Star's Serin Chung (45.18 seconds). In the boys division, Mister got his third first place finisher after submitting 42 seconds more than two seconds ahead of schoolmate Coneil Hartig (44.64 seconds).

Also gaining another field-best mark was Wabol, who topped the boys U12 with a time of 34.51 seconds, while Galang came in next with his 34.76 seconds.

In the long jump where the Top 3 finishers in each zone will advance, Lamar led the U8 qualifiers with her 2.50m. Rangamar and Nepaial notched the two other spots after submitting identical 2.10m marks. In the boys division, Mister was still on top with his 2.80m, followed by Hartig (2.17m), and Gregoire (2.14m).

In the girls U10 and U12, Whispering Palms had sweeps. Thompson posted 2.77m and Ariya McGuire and Mia Hirsh recorded 2.19m and 2.10m, respectively in the U10, while Montenegro (3.25m) edged Villagomez (2.72m) in the U12 age group.

In the boys U12, Galang registered 3.60m to down fellow Turtles bet Wabol (3.46m) and Goodwin (2.90m).

SAKOVICH

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hour motivational discussion," Tsunami Saipan coach Hiro Kimura said in an email to *Saipan Tribune*.

Kensuke Kimura, Takumi Sugie, Angel Marie Tan, Angel De Jesus, Kaito, Hiroto, and Ryuto Yanai, and Miku Tammy, who are all members of the club's senior team, attended the first session. In the second session, which was for Tsunami Saipan swimmers in the junior/developmental pool, 13 participated. The list includes Daime and Kyona Rivera, Yuuki Nishida, Mark Maestro, Karen and Towa Irinaka, Megumi and Jhota Yoshino, Kathrine Illahi, Sophia Gauran, Aika Watanabe, Juhn Tenorio, and Kenshiro Yanai.

Besides the practical part of the clinic, Tsunami Saipan swimmers also learned information about the history of Saipan swimming, international meets, FINA, and the Micronesian Games, Pacific Games, and Oceania Championships.

"I thought the clinic and discussions went well. They were interested in what I was saying. I enjoyed working with them," said Sakovich, who returned to Saipan early last month for the 2013 XTERRA Saipan and Tagaman Triathlon.

"I tried to get across the importance of swimming their best time with proper stroke technique and they should try to participate in other water events, so they do not burn out. Just make the necessary stroke corrections and perfect your stroke, and your time will drop. One of their swimmers (Tan) participated in the XTERRA and Tagaman Triathlons and I was happy for that," Sakovich added.

Hiro Kimura thanked the veteran coach for finding time to teach Tsunami Saipan swimmers and encourage them to continue improving their skills.

"Three swimmers who participated in this clinic marked CNMI records at the Saipan International Meet. There are also a lot of young swimmers who got personal best times and awards. Juhn Tenorio and Kenshiro Yanai had a 1-2 finish in the U8 high point race and in the 9 to 10, Sophia Gauran won third place," the Tsunami Saipan mentor said.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-New York	46	26	.639	—
x-Brooklyn	42	31	.575	4½
Boston	38	36	.514	9
Philadelphia	30	43	.411	16½
Toronto	27	47	.365	20

Southeast Division

z-Miami	58	15	.795	—
x-Atlanta	42	33	.560	17
Washington	27	46	.370	31
Orlando	19	56	.253	40
Charlotte	17	57	.230	41½

Central Division

x-Indiana	48	27	.640	—
x-Chicago	40	32	.556	6½
Milwaukee	36	37	.493	11
Detroit	25	50	.333	23
Cleveland	22	51	.301	25

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

x-San Antonio	55	19	.743	—
x-Memphis	50	24	.676	5
Houston	41	33	.554	14
Dallas	36	37	.493	18½
New Orleans	26	48	.351	29

Northwest Division

x-Oklahoma City	54	20	.730	—
x-Denver	50	24	.676	4
Utah	39	36	.520	15½
Portland	33	41	.446	21
Minnesota	27	46	.370	26½

Pacific Division

x-L.A. Clippers	49	26	.653	—
Golden State	42	32	.568	6½
L.A. Lakers	38	36	.514	10½
Sacramento	27	47	.365	21½
Phoenix	23	51	.311	25½

x-clinched playoff spot
z-clinched conference

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	1	0	1.000	—
Baltimore	0	0	.000	½
Tampa Bay	0	0	.000	½
Toronto	0	0	.000	½
New York	0	1	.000	1

Central Division

Chicago	1	0	1.000	—
Detroit	1	0	1.000	—
Cleveland	0	0	.000	½
Kansas City	0	1	.000	1
Minnesota	0	1	.000	1

West Division

Houston	1	0	1.000	—
Los Angeles	1	0	1.000	—
Seattle	1	0	1.000	—
Oakland	0	1	.000	1
Texas	0	1	.000	1

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Atlanta	1	0	1.000	—
New York	1	0	1.000	—
Washington	1	0	1.000	—
Miami	0	1	.000	1
Philadelphia	0	1	.000	1

Central Division

Chicago	1	0	1.000	—
Milwaukee	1	0	1.000	—
Cincinnati	0	1	.000	1
Pittsburgh	0	1	.000	1
St. Louis	0	1	.000	1

West Division

Arizona	1	0	1.000	—
Los Angeles	1	0	1.000	—
Colorado	0	1	.000	1
San Diego	0	1	.000	1
San Francisco	0	1	.000	1

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chuukese Track and Field Championships

PHOTOS By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

A Tonoas runner, front, crosses the finish line at full speed to win the boys U14 200-meter heat during the 2nd Chuukese Track and Field Championships held in February at the Oleai Sports Complex.

A trio of U14 girls compete in the 100-meter race.

A Fanapi runner outruns the pack during the girls U18 200-meter heat.

Four U18 boys runners blast out of the turn during a 200-meter qualifying heat.

A Fanapi runner, front, edges a Faichuuk competitor during the girls U16 200-meter heat.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

13 CNMI players in ITF event

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Thirteen CNMI junior players will compete in the IT&E Northern Marianas Open Junior Championships that will be played next month at the Pacific Islands Club hard court.

Tommy Choi, seen here competing in the 2013 White Coconut Tennis Classic in February, is among the 13 CNMI players who will see action in the IT&E Northern Marianas Open Junior Championships next month.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tournament director and Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association president Jeff Race in an email to Saipan Tribune yesterday said that the host country will field eight boys and five girls in the May 20 to 26 event—the first Junior ITF event that the CNMI will be hosting. Rafael Jones leads the boys list and will be joined by fellow U18 player Tommy Choi, Seiya Eda, and Amami Sakano and U15's Colin Ramsey, Chris Cajigan, Moris

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Sakovich holds clinic for Tsunami Saipan

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Saipan Swim Club founder Bill Sakovich gestures to Tsunami Saipan swimmers during a clinic held last month at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Swim Club founder and CNMI Sports Hall of Fame Bill Sakovich conducted a clinic for members of the Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan last month at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

"The clinic was divided into two sessions. The first one was for two hours and focus on technical coaching, while the second was for a one-

See SAKOVICH on Page 26

Close fight in Zone B qualifier

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Three schools from Zone B were neck and neck in the battle for top spots in the qualifying events of the 2013 PSS/McDonald's All Schools Championships.

In the 18 events scheduled for the zone in Week 1 (March 19), Oleai Elementary School reigned supreme in seven, Whispering Palms ruled six, and Brilliant Star won five. Kagman Elementary School and San Antonio are also included in Zone B, but missed Week 1 of the qualifying tournament for the 60m, 100m, and 200m runs and long jump at the Oleai Sports Complex.

Zone B's qualifier started with the 60m race with Oleai and Brilliant Star splitting top honors. Lorah Nepaial notched first place in the girls U8 with her 10.78 seconds, while Brilliant Star's Dylan Mister had

See CLOSE on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Students compete in Week 1's 100m qualifier for the 2013 PSS/McDonald's All Schools Championships late last month at the Oleai Sports Complex.

Go Kart Championship this Saturday

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tourists enjoy a Go Kart ride at the Marianas Seaside Circuit, which will be the venue of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands' 1st Annual Budweiser Go Kart Championship that will be held this Saturday.

All is set for the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands-organized Budweiser Go Kart Championship this Saturday at the Mariana Seaside Circuit.

The following cash prizes will be awarded: $2,000 for 1st place, $1,000 for 2nd place, and $500 for 3rd place.

Food vendors are invited to join the fundraising food fair at the grounds on race day. Food vendor registration is free, but twenty percent commission of all food sales will be contributed to the HANMI Charity

See GO KART on Page 26